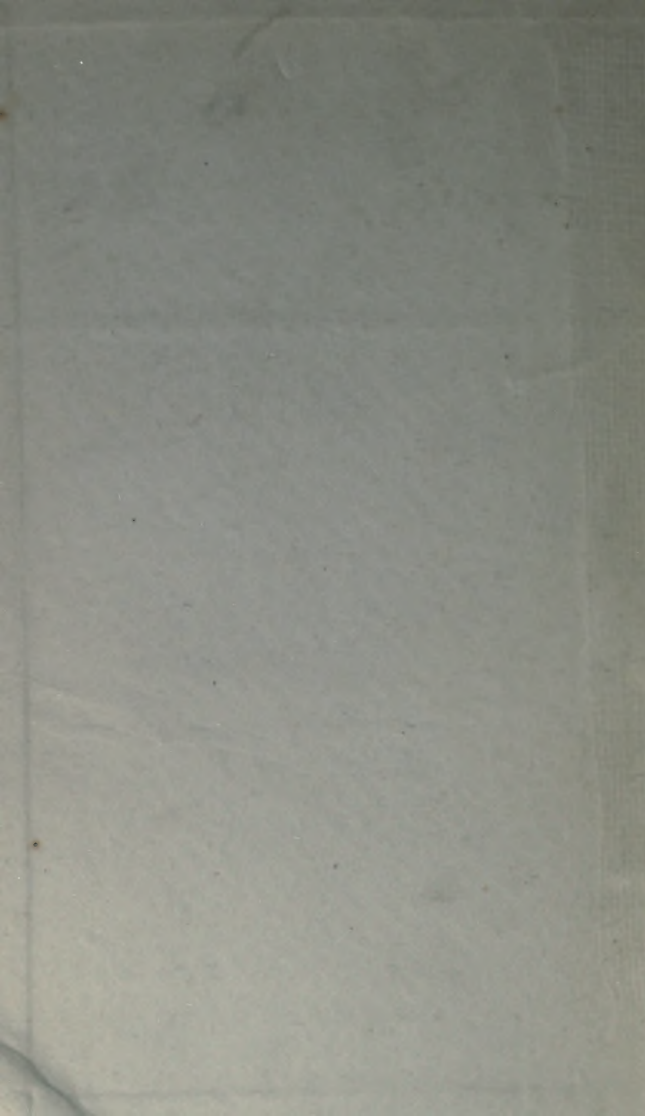




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THE MILITANT PROLETARIAT

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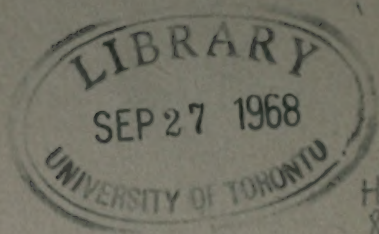
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The Militant Proletariat

BY
AUSTIN LEWIS



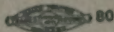
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The Militant Proletariat

I

SOCIALISM AND THE PROLETARIAT

The Socialist movement has based itself upon the proletariat. That fact is undeniable. From the time of the Marxian statement in the Communist Manifesto, there could no longer be any doubt that henceforward the Socialist movement relied upon the proletarian class alone, as the stimulating factor in the social revolution. This was not always the case, for the early Socialists, who had proclaimed their utopian ideas prior to the publication of the Communist Manifesto, had calculated upon something quite other than proletarianism for their victory over the oppression and misery with which they saw themselves surrounded, and which it was their benevolent and philanthropic mission to destroy. The early Socialists had sought to impress their ideas upon the more fortunate, and, by a sort of religion and experimental society building, to purge the world of the evils which possessed it and prepare for a paradisiacal condition of equality and well-being. Against these concepts the pioneers of the modern Socialist movement were compelled to struggle at the very inception, and thus

was written the Communist Manifesto, the first proclamation of the fundamental principles now underlying the world-wide Socialist movement, which asks the question, "In what relation do the Communists stand to the proletarians as a whole?" and replies, "The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working class parties. They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole. They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own by which to shape and mould the proletarian movement." In other words, the Communists, who are the modern Socialists, the term Communist having been used merely to differentiate them from the utopians who had brought the term Socialist into disrepute, do not consider themselves as apart from the proletariat but as constituting part of the proletarian army, differentiating themselves from the ordinary proletarian only by their knowledge of the direction and end of the march. Thus the Manifesto declares, "The Communists are therefore, on the one hand, practically the most advanced and resolute section of the working class parties of every country, that section which pushes forward all others; on the other hand, theoretically they have over the great mass of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march, the conditions and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement."

There is no question, therefore, that the Socialist movement from its early stages has regarded the proletariat as the means of revolution, as the chief agent in accomplishing the over-

throw of existing social and political conditions and substituting for them something quite other, and this notion by no means expired with its enunciation in the Manifesto. It has remained and still remains as the very foundation doctrine of the Socialist Movement. Marx said, "The proletarian movement is the self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority in the interest of the immense majority." In another place, he states, "The proletarian, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent structure of official society being sprung into the air." The concluding words of the Communist Manifesto in which the working class of the world is called upon to unite, upon the ground that it has only chains to lose and a world to gain, have become a universal war cry of the Socialist movement, are translated into all modern languages and have already produced a bulky mass of commentary. They may be regarded as the very essence of the Socialist movement. Even today they have not lost their potency and the contest which is waged in the ranks of the Socialist movement has its practical inception in the difference of opinion as to how far a given line of action represents or fails to represent proletarian interests.

The ideas of the proletarian are regarded, therefore, as the materialization of the Socialist philosophy. The ideas of the proletarian are the ideas of socialism; the aspirations of the proletarian are the aspirations of socialism, the victory of socialism is at once the triumph and the annihilation of the proletarian, for, by the

institution of the socialist state, the proletarian vanishes, he becomes translated into something different, namely, the citizen of a co-operative commonwealth.

The later exponents of socialism have been notably inspired by this view. Thus, Liebknecht says, "For our party and for our party tactics there is but one valid basis, the basis of the class struggle out of which the Social Democratic Party has sprung up, and out of which alone it can draw the necessary strength to bid defiance to every storm and to all its enemies. The founders of our party, Marx, Engels, and Lasselle, impressed upon the workingmen the necessity of the class character of our movement so deeply that down to a very recent time there were no considerable deviations or getting off the track" (Liebknecht, "No Compromise," Kerr, Chicago).

Not only so but the writer already quoted considers that the considerable admixture of an element other than proletarian is actually inimical to the socialist movement; thus he says: "In short we have now in Germany a phenomenon which has been observable in France for half a century and longer, and which has contributed much to the confusion of the party relations in France, viz., that a part of the radical bourgeoisie rallies round the Socialist flag without understanding the nature of socialism. This political socialism, which in fact is only philanthropic humanitarian radicalism, has retarded the development of socialism in France exceedingly. It has diluted and blurred the principles and weakened the socialist party because it has

brought with it troops upon which no reliance could be placed in the decisive movement."

The tactics of the Socialist movement are thus described by Liebknecht: "This tactic consists in keeping clear the class character of the Socialist party as a proletarian party, to train it by agitation, education and organization for the victorious completion of the emancipation struggle, to wage a systematic war against the class state."

The result of this class war is more fully stated by the same leader thus: "The political power which the social democracy aims at and which it will own, no matter what its enemies may do, has not for its object the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat, but the suppression of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, just as the class struggle which the proletariat carries on is only a counter struggle in self defense to resist the class struggle of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, and the end of this struggle by the victory of the proletariat will be the abolition of the class struggle in every form."

Kautsky, who may be considered as more moderate than Liebknecht in many ways, and less endowed with the reckless fire of the propagandist, still accepts the same position, or at least did so in 1899, for in his "Class Struggle" (translation by William E. Bohn, Kerr Company, Chicago) he says:

"This social transformation means the liberation not only of the proletariat but of the whole human race; only the working class, however, can bring it about. All other classes, despite their conflicting interests, maintain their exist-

ence on the basis of the private ownership of the means of production and therefore have a common motive for supporting the principles of the existing social order," and the Erfurt Program, which represented very largely the point of view of Social Democratic Germany twenty years ago and is still perhaps the most complete document on the theoretical and political side of the movement, states: "Forever greater grows the number of proletarians, more gigantic the army of superfluous laborers, and sharper the opposition between exploiters and exploited. The class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is the common work of all industrial countries; it divides modern society into two opposing camps and the warfare between them constantly increases in bitterness."

It is true that there has always been a tendency among certain Socialists to minimize the importance of the class struggle, and to place the propaganda upon a footing which would be acceptable to other than members of the proletarian class. It cannot be said however with any degree of truth that such efforts have had any real effect upon the movement as a whole. The proletarian form of the Socialist movement is that which flourishes and develops. Marxism is the dominant note wherever the Socialist movement has firmly planted itself. This does not mean that philosophic Marxism, in the narrow and restricted sense in which the term is employed by some economic determinists, is comprehended by the majority or even by a numerous minority of the members of the Socialist party. It does mean, however, that the idea that

the ultimate destiny of the Socialist movement rests in the hands of the working class tends more and more to prevail, and that the conception of the Socialist movement as representing the proletariat and implying in its victory the successful revolution of the proletariat is becoming the dominant conception. In fact, the harmony which has developed of late between the working class in politics and the Socialist party tends more and more to impress this not only upon the mind of the Socialist agitator and the working class, but upon the intelligence and the fears of those who discover that what they had regarded as a dangerous abstraction is fast becoming an actual and threatening reality.

The candidates for admission to the Socialist Party are in many cases compelled to sign a pledge that they believe in the class struggle, so that it is intended that there shall be no misunderstanding with regard to the objects and aims of the Socialist Party. The class struggle means the unavoidable conflict, not necessarily physical, between the working class and the rest of society and the Socialist Party advertises itself therefore as the champion of the working class in this conflict. The term "proletarian" has become so widely known, owing to the Socialist agitation, that it has been actually adopted into the language in spite of much protest. A little while ago the newspapers were indignantly hostile to its employment, claiming that the very expression was in itself insulting to that superior person, the American workingman, but the latter has more lately developed a taste for the word as being more representative and complete than

any other and as a result there is little doubt that an expression which was until very recently regarded as a term of opprobrium will in all probability, by virtue of the gains of the Socialist and the victories of the working class, actually become a distinctive term, regarded as an honor by those who bear it and with hatred by the others.

It is certain that in the Socialist Party and movement itself the word it not looked down upon. On the contrary, it is carried with something very much akin to pride. A working man who is a Socialist calls himself a proletarian without any apology therefor, and with perfect naturalness, as though he were to call himself an American or a German. In fact, he frequently uses the term in contradistinction to the national term and will often reply that he has no nationality, that he is a proletarian, thus placing his class distinctiveness against and in antagonism to national separativeness; in fact, advertising the internationalism of his class.

The criticism is made of even members of the Socialist Party itself, that they are not proletarians, and even loyal and devoted members of classes other than the proletarian have much trouble in overcoming the inherent dislike of the proletarians, who frequently state, as a ground for their suspicions, that the person under discussion is not a proletarian.

If the word is used by the members of the working class as a distinctive appellation it is not so employed by those who have no claim to it. A professional man, for instance, would have no hesitancy in proclaiming himself a So-

cialist, but he neither could nor would call himself a proletarian. He would on the other hand not be backward in saying that he considered the interests of the proletarians as paramount, and would declare that the Socialist movement exists for the benefit of the proletarian.

In so far as the Socialist political movement stands for the proletariat it is in accord with the fundamental Socialist doctrines; wherever it steps aside from that service to the proletariat it is recreant to them. The strength of the Socialist movement depends not primarily upon the number of votes which it polls, nor upon the number of parliamentary seats which it occupies, nor upon the number of municipalities which it controls in the name of socialism, but most and chiefly upon the degree with which it pursues the interests of the proletarian exclusively.

There can be no question of the inseparability of socialism and the proletariat. The Social revolution is admittedly dependent upon the self-conscious growth of the proletarian class.

This could not indeed have been put more strongly than by Liebknecht, who, in his letter to the Marxists at Epernay, August 10th, 1899, declares: "On the ground of the class struggle we are invincible; if we leave it we are lost, because we are no longer Socialists. The strength and power of socialism rest in the fact that we are leading a class struggle." As far as the Marxist wing of the Socialist movement is concerned there can be no doubt as to its dependence upon the class struggle concept. The social revolution rests therefore in the hands of the proletariat.

THE PROLETARIAT

The proletariat is the product of modern capitalism. It is so regarded by the Socialists, and in any discussion involving the Socialist conception of the proletariat it is necessary to bear this in mind. There was no proletarian class in the Middle Ages. "Proletarian" signifies a class distinct from its predecessors in modern history. It does not mean poor, or degraded, or pertaining to the slums or anything else that is vile and low, as the use of the word so often implies.

The proletarian is the product of the modern world. He is brought into being by the very conditions against which he must contend. Thus the Communist Manifesto declared: "But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians. Hence the term proletarian and modern working class are held to be synonymous.

What was the reason then for inventing a new term? It appears in the next paragraph of the Manifesto. "In proportion as the bourgeoisie, *i. e.*, capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed, a class of laborers, who live only as long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labor increases capital. These laborers who must sell themselves piecemeal as a commodity, like every other article of commerce, and are consequently exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition to all the fluctuations of the market."

The proletarian therefore has no property, he has no place in society as at present constituted except to sink himself in his work and to pass on his vitality to his descendants, who will perform the same functions and in their turn disappear.

To find a name which would fit such a class one had to go to the history of Rome. The break-up of the small farms, the extinction of the peasant proprietorship, and the merging of vast numbers of formerly independent Romans in the City, had produced a class denominated *proletarii*, or "breeders," who were of no account except to produce descendants. This term was applied to the modern working class as we have seen and hence arose the expression "proletarian," a term much hated but rapidly carrying with it the implications of power which recent achievements in industry and politics under its name necessarily convey.

To have contemplated the working class, at the time of the writing of the Communist Manifesto, as the means of its own liberation was one of the most daring conceptions. Never had a large part of humanity been lower than in the commercial and industrial communities at that time. Perhaps the statement of the Manifesto, "at this stage the laborers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country and broken up by their mutual competition," expresses their condition more completely than many pages of attempted description. Engels' famous "Condition of the Working Class in England" shows the depths to which the working class had fallen and the misery which accompanied

the beginnings of the modern system. The blue books of the day and the Parliamentary debates all bear witness that the estimate of the Manifesto was not exaggerated and that the condition of the working masses was deplorable. How out of this mass of misery was the redemption to come? Whence was the revolutionary impulse to proceed?

Evidently not from the mass itself, as it was in the middle of the nineteenth century. A few years before parts of that mass had in a delirium of suffering destroyed factories and wrecked machinery as a protest against their tortures. They had of course been whipped back to the kennels again. The constabulary and the yeomanry killed and wounded, the judge sat and sentenced, and the sleek and complacent wrote novels and essays to show the inherent foolishness of machine smashing. Only old Carlyle growled cynical remonstrance at the powers that were, and the Christian Socialists tried to protest in terms of the Gospel.

In spite of all, however, the worker became more and more dependent upon the machine, and continually more subordinated to the movements of the machine. And the machine, though his tyrant, came in the long run to be his deliverer. Gathered about the machine he learned organization; trained and drilled in subordination to the movements of the machine he learned discipline for his own ends, so that the proletarian entering the factory system, "an incoherent mass," passes out of it, still a proletariat, it is true, but a proletariat who has learnt the art of organization and of political expression.

Gradually from the mass of the proletarians, groups begin to emerge who engage in contest with the employers. These groups naturally come into collision with the employing class at the point of contact, that is, in the shop. At first there is no question of anything beyond the price of labor. The bargain is made in terms of the bourgeois system itself, and there is an effort, just as between rival merchants, to higggle the market and arrive at a price for labor. The effort of the labor organization is directed towards maintaining the rate of wages, which is seldom more than is required for necessities in accordance with a standard which tends to vary somewhat in different localities.

The fact is that the skilled laborers were first to form unions and combinations for the purpose of improving their economic conditions, as it was more difficult to fill their places. The consequence of this was the success of skilled labor in effecting an organization to stand up against reductions and in some instances to gain actual concessions from the employing class. The following words of the Erfurt Program are as true today as when they were written:

"Forever greater grows the number of proletarians, more gigantic the army of superfluous laborers, and sharper the opposition between exploiters and exploited. The class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is the common mark of all industrial countries, it divides modern society into two opposing camps and the warfare between them constantly increases in bitterness."

The increasing difficulty of escape from the proletarian class is an important consideration, for the conflict might be avoided by the proletarian ceasing to be proletarian and climbing

into some class where he might have more security than in the proletarian class.

In fact there is no question that the possibility presented to the active and clever proletarian in the United States to escape from his own class into a more secure position has had very considerable influence in causing the comparative backwardness of the working class to assert itself in the United States.

Such a condition, however, could not in the very nature of things be permanent. Indeed, it has practically come to an end with much greater rapidity than could have been reasonably anticipated. The practical absorption of the public lands, largely helped by immense confiscatory grants which the greater capitalism in the shape of the transportation companies demanded as an essential prerequisite to their engaging in business; the extension of the greater capitalism into practically every remunerative form of productive industry, the extension along with it of organization in the distributive system have all combined to make farming and small business, the two most obvious ways by which the proletarian might hope to escape from his proletarianism, impossible. There can be no question that the avenues of personal development in the United States are fast becoming closed and that henceforward the American working man will have to rely more upon his efforts as a member of his class than upon his own personal efforts for his individual success. Henceforth his lot in life becomes to an ever increasing degree dependent upon the conditions of others like himself. He cannot rise out of the working

class. He is inevitably and irremediably confined to the class to which he belongs and his economic position becomes more and more determined by the economic position of the class. Hence his whole salvation depends upon class action.

Where it becomes clear to the average man that his chance of a decent livelihood and his sole opportunity for the advancement of his family is dependent upon the advancement of his class, it is clear that the class struggle, upon which, as we have seen, socialism lays such emphasis, is not far away, even if it is not actually at the doors.

The realization of this fact of the interdependence of the members of the class one upon another, in other words the substitution of a collective for an individual ethic, is, generally speaking, a matter of considerable time, but events have moved so rapidly in the United States that a few years have sufficed to cause the formation of a party actually pledged to the class struggle and to develop that party up to the point where it becomes a very distinct factor in public affairs.

It must be remembered that the formation of such a party in the United States and the growth of the sentiments which the development and growth of such a party imply mean much more than the development of any of the Social Democratic parties heretofore known in Europe. This is so, because the United States starts from a place much further up the line of political progress. Even in the strongest of the European Socialist parties there is a strong mixture of bour-

geois radicalism because the complete liberation from feudalism has not been entirely accomplished. Here, the establishment of a strong Socialist movement based upon a class struggle theory necessarily implies an attack upon the economic foundations of the modern state, which is certain to be vehemently resisted by the possessing classes. Hence follows a class war or something closely approximating it, unless a recognition of the actual conditions brings about such a reasonable state of mind that steady progress in the Socialist direction is peacefully pursued.

So far in Europe the governing classes have been wise enough to avoid the revolutionary issue by the passing of remedial legislation and the gradual yielding to the necessity of provision for the least able and the common laborer, the woman worker and the child. The European governments have already doomed supply and demand in labor and *laissez-faire* to the scrap heap. Only in the United States do the ghosts of dead bourgeois economists still walk and the bogies of fifty years ago are paraded in the face of the progressive workman of today. It is a condition ominous in the extreme and one which wise statesmanship would have done everything possible to avoid.

In no department has the happy-go-lucky character of American statesmanship made itself so conspicuous as in that of social questions. This has arisen partly from the fact that the new conditions have developed so rapidly that the need of governmental interference for the benefit of inhabitants of the United States had not time

to penetrate the average brain; besides, the great mass of common labor having been largely alien, its needs have not so far impressed themselves with any strength upon the mind of the politician, particularly as such a large percentage does not vote.

Warning voices to American statesmen have been raised from across the Atlantic many times in recent years. None, however, have been stronger or more able than the statement of Sidney and Beatrice Webb in their introduction to "Problems of Modern Industry," second edition, 1902.

Speaking of the effect of the trust they say:

The competent, "pushful," native-born American will get on all right under this capitalist autocracy. He will, indeed, have to give up the chance of becoming his own master, and practically, that of "making a pile." But what will be virtually the civil service of industry, the great salaried hierarchy of the Trusts, will offer a safer and, on the average, a better paid career for industrial talent than the old chances of the market. Every man of skill and energy, competence and "go" will be wanted in the gigantic organization of the new industry. Brains will be at a premium.

From the skilled mechanic right up to the highest engineering genius, from the competent foreman up to the highest railway organizer, from the merely practised chemist up to the heaven-born inventor or designer, all will find, not merely employment, but scope for their whole talent; not merely remuneration but salaries such as the world has seldom seen. And in serving their employers they will be at least as directly serving the community as they are at present.

It is when we come to the great mass of wage-earners—the ten or fifteen millions of day laborers and ordinary artisans—that we see the really grave consequences of industrial autocracy. These men, with their wives and families, must necessarily constitute the

great bulk of the population, the "common lump of men." It is in their lives that the civilization of a nation consists, and it is by their condition that it will be judged. And, though the great ones never believe it, it is upon the status, the culture, the upward progress of these ordinary men that the prosperity of the nation, and even the profits of the capitalists, ultimately depend. What is likely to be the Standard of Life of the ordinary laborer or artisan under the great industrial corporations of the United States?

The authors go on to state that without a remedial policy approaching what they term a "national minimum," meaning a scale of wages, leisure, education, etc., which must be compulsory and enforced by the power of the State, "to what awful depths of misery and demoralization, brutality and degradation, humanity can, under 'perfect freedom' descend, we are scarcely yet in a position to say. Is this to be the contribution to economics in the twentieth century of the country of Jefferson and Washington?"

The reader may judge as well as the writer of the chances of remedial legislation of the description here suggested at the hand of the ordinary American politician. Such a change of heart is impossible to contemplate. Nine years have passed since the above words were written, and actual events make them almost prophetic. But in the meantime little or nothing has been done to change the current of events and to mitigate the results of the operation of the system now in full control.

The alternative to remedial action is thus stated:

As yet, the American citizen still believes himself to be free, and sees not the industrial subjection into

which he is rapidly passing. But, it is not to be supposed that he will witness unmoved the successive failures of trade unions and strikes, the general reductions in wages which will mark the first spell of bad trade, the manifold dismissals and "shuttings down," the progressive degradation of his class. He will take up every wild dream and every mad panacea. He will be tricked and outvoted again and again; but, if so, the result will be a "class war" more terrible than any the world has seen, and one in which, though the ultimate victory will be with the common people, American civilization may go back several generations.

And thus in the last analysis we are brought again to the proletariat and the class war.

In another republic, France, one of by no means the most advanced Socialists arrives at the same conclusion in the following words:

Not only does the proletariat too often suffer violence directly from the economic power of capitalists, but, if I may say so, its own mind is distorted by the habit of the social regime under which it lives. The worst tyranny exerted by a social regime or form is, that in absorbing all the strength of the workers and pouring them into the mould of contemporary society, it renders a very great number of workers whom it overwhelms incapable even of conceiving another possible way of applying their strength. Thus, contemporary society weighs doubly on the workers in the exercise of this political sovereignty; which is violated, firstly, by the employers, and, secondly, by the silent and chronic capitalistic prejudice, stamped by habit on the very class which suffers from its sway. It is to react against these fatal effects—this pressure, this distortion—exerted by economic inequality even on the political action of the wage-workers, that we must affirm, always within the democracy, the antagonism of classes and the need of the proletarian class to organize, and always affirm the collectivist or communist ideal in the definite, precise, vigorous form needed to dissipate the capitalistic prejudice inoculated into the proletarian class itself.

(Speech of Jaures at Bordeaux Congress, April 12-14, 1903, from "Modern Socialism" edited by E. K. Ensor.)

Hence we stand practically today where we did sixty years ago. The proletarian class is regarded as the savior of society. Out of it still must come the force to overturn the existing state and to establish conditions more in harmony with the aspirations of the progressive.

In the last analysis even the moderate and the timorous middle classes fall back upon the proletariat as a last resort. As we have seen the Webbs, as a punishment for the neglect of the National Minimum, threaten us with a class war, and Jaures who has always looked approvingly to middle class action is still driven finally to rely upon that proletariat with whose movements and conscious tendencies he is so often in disagreement.

Even the victory of the moderate Fabian policy would make no difference in the long run for the process of political and industrial development would not be complete without a marshaling of the proletarian forces. The battle must still be fought out between the capitalist and the proletarian. That statement which has seemed so crude to the student and against which the learned and the humane in the reformers' ranks have protested, and the facts of which they have endeavored to ignore, still remains, as the most categorical and the most fundamentally true of all the utterances put forth by the Socialist movement. The movement is in its essence revolutionary, it cannot contemplate anything short of the transformation of modern society in ac-

tuality as well as in ethical concept and economic doctrine.

When the proletariat is regarded, however, as the means by which such results should be accomplished, the reputable and the wise refuse to admit the possibility of such achievements at the hands of such a class.

The reason for such hesitancy on the part of the middle class reformer is easy to understand from the contemplation of the vastness of this force, its apparent unmanageability, its lack of unity, the hopeless monotony of its life and more than all the apparently sullen and unintelligent fashion in which it regards events and life.

There is the slum proletariat into which drop the accumulated failures from the other classes and which festers and moulders in the great cities. It is the despair of philanthropists and a constant commentary upon the wastefulness and brutality of modern life. As a revolutionary factor it can be ignored. The fancy pictures which frightened clergymen and delirious newspapers draw of the slums turning out tens of thousands to sack and pillage are merely fancy. The slums are not revolutionary. Long ago, at the very beginning, the founders of the Socialist movement disposed of the slum proletariat as an effective factor in revolt. The Communist Manifesto says: "The dangerous class, the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may here and there be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue."

How true this statement is may be observed by all who have taken part in elections.

The polling booths on the edge of the red light district are the center of fraudulent voting. Here are the abodes of prostitutes and thieves, of vagrants and drunkards, from which, however, the police derive their hush-money, and on which batten the minor city officials and the submerged portion of the municipal governments. It is here that the respectable candidate gathers most of the votes which constitute his majority. Endorsed by the church, and supported by the mass of respectable citizens living on the hillsides, the hordes of crime and the slum proletariat flock to his standard and the two extremes of modern city life unite in a common effort to perpetuate the evils of the day. There is no new thing in all this. It has always happened. It is part of the machinery of government today as it was sixty years ago, and the truth of the Communist Manifesto statement may be fully grasped from the fact that in many cities of the United States today the power is held by the possessing class largely, if not altogether in some districts, by and through the vote of the slum proletariat. A political contest in which the Socialists have taken a sufficiently prominent part to cause them to closely overhaul the voting registers and to protect themselves against fraud at the polls always reveals a startlingly corrupt condition. In every State the register was discovered to be padded and in one city, of more than a hundred and fifty thousand in which the Socialists recently polled nearly ten thousand votes, it was discovered that almost one third of the register was fraudulent.

The same conditions prevail, there is little reason to doubt, over the whole country, and naturally to a greater degree in the slum districts than elsewhere, as these offer the greatest opportunity for fraud, owing to the transient character of the population and the number of cheap lodging houses in which those districts abound.

We may therefore exclude the slum proletariat from any consideration of the revolutionary forces which are to be looked for in the proletariat as a whole.

If, however, we cut down the proletariat as a revolutionary factor by the elimination of the lower element, we must also make a further subtraction of much of what has been regarded as the higher and better paid portion of the proletariat.

In considering this portion of the proletariat, namely the highly paid, well-skilled artisan, Kautsky, in spite of his usual clearness, seems to be under a cloud as to the relation of this portion of the proletarian class to the social revolution. Thus in the *Class Struggle* he says: "It was naturally the skilled workers who began the struggle for better conditions. The fact that it was difficult to find substitutes for them in case of a strike gave them an important advantage. Their position was not unlike that of the medieval apprentices and in many respects their unions were natural descendants of the guilds." But that Kautsky at this stage does not recognize in these unions, (English and American pure and simple unions) any real tendency towards the social revolution is very clear from what he says immediately after:

But, if modern skilled laborers inherited certain advantages from their predecessors, they also took over from them one tendency which has done great harm to the modern labor movement. This is the tendency to separate the various crafts. Naturally, those in the best position to fight have won for themselves superior advantages and have come to look upon themselves as an aristocracy of labor. Looking only at their own interest, they have been content to rise at the expense of their less fortunate comrades.

Far-sighted politicians and industrial leaders have not been slow to take advantage of this condition. Today the worst enemies of the working class are not the stupid, reactionary statesmen who hope to keep down the labor movement through openly repressive measures. Its worst enemies are the pretended friends who encourage craft unions, and thus attempt to cut off the skilled trades from the rest of their class. They are trying to turn the most efficient division of the proletarian army against the great mass, against those whose position as unskilled workers makes them least capable of defense.

In other words the highly skilled trades separate themselves from the mass of the proletariat and obtain for themselves a position apart and superior to the rest of the proletariat. This is precisely the history of the pure and simple, highly skilled unions in America, Britain and the British colonies. They have segregated themselves from the rest of the mass of their fellow workers and have made independent trade contracts with their employer many times to the detriment of members of the proletariat less fortunately placed than themselves.

This estimate agrees with that of the Webbs, as appears from the following quotation from the Introduction to *Problems of Modern Industry*, already several times quoted:

The workers may "kick;" there may be labor unions and strikes; but, against such industrial omnipotence the weapons of the wage-earners are as arrows against ironclads. This will be all the more certainly the case, because it will suit the leviathan, as a matter of convenience, to come to terms with the small minority of skilled and well-paid workmen, who might have stiffened the rest. This is the condition of monopolist autocracy into which every great industry in the United States seems fated to pass, and to pass with great rapidity. A few thousands of millionaire capitalist "kings," uniting the means of a few hundreds of thousands of passive stockholders, and served by, perhaps, an equal number of well salaried managers, foremen, inventors, designers, chemists, engineers, and skilled mechanics, will absolutely control an army of ten or fifteen millions of practically property-less wage laborers, largely Slavonic, Latin, or Negro in race.

The situation here described is at least as far as the English speaking countries are concerned practically universal. The higher class mechanics, and by that we mean those whose possession of special skill allows them to restrict the market, have taken no part in any general working class movement. On the contrary, when the lower paid of the working class have endeavored to improve their condition, the higher paid have not hesitated to stand by the employers and by means of contracts with the employers, to rob the poorer employes of the chance of improving their condition.

In politics we find practically the same condition of things. The labor unions, embracing the more highly skilled and organized branches of labor, support, as a rule, the greater capitalism in some form or other. Usually they vote directly for the representatives of the great economic interests. Sometimes, however, they form

a labor party which, while apparently proletarian, or, at least, working class in form, is, in reality an adherent of the greater capitalism in substance. Instances of this may be seen in San Francisco, and quite noticeably in the antipodean (Australasian and South African) labor parties. On the South African Rand the greater capitalism is unpopular and the people who know confidently predict that it may have to achieve its purposes by the aid, at least, of a labor party. As the matter stands at present there does not appear to be any real revolutionary impulse in those trade organizations which are most familiar to us and which are considered as representative of labor in its best developed and most advanced state. In fact, the trade unionists would vehemently and passionately deny any desire or intention of destroying the present system and producing a condition approximating the Socialist concept. Their class feeling is to say the least exceedingly hazy and manifests itself only in times of stress and then temporarily and probably intentionally. At least, only on occasions in which organized labor is threatened, is the cry that the working class must stand together raised. At all other times the position of the proletariat, which does not come under the description of organized labor, is ignored and flouted by better paid and well organized labor. As we shall see, this phenomenon is in the very nature of things merely transitory and must pass away with the greater development of the machine process and the more complete organization of industry. In the meantime, however, it manifestly exists, all theories to the contrary

notwithstanding, and effectually, at least for the present, places a bar in the path of Socialist development by the proletariat. Kautsky says:

But, sooner or later, the aristocratic tendency of even the most skilled class of laborers will be broken. As mechanical production advances, one craft after another is tumbled into the abyss of common labor. This fact is constantly teaching even the most effectively organized divisions, that in the long run their position is dependent upon the strength of the working-class as a whole. They come to the conclusion that it is a mistaken policy to attempt to rise on the shoulders of those who are sinking in a quicksand. They come to see that the struggles of other divisions of the proletariat are by no means foreign to them.

At the same time, one division of the unskilled after another rises out of its stupid lethargy or mere purposeless discontent. This is, in part, a natural consequence of the successes achieved by the skilled laborers. The direct results of the activities of the unskilled proletarians may seem unimportant; nevertheless, it is these activities that bring about the moral regeneration of this division of the working class.

Thus, there has gradually formed from skilled and unskilled workers a body of proletarians who are in the movement of labor, or the labor movement. It is the part of the proletariat which is fighting for the interests of the whole class, its church militant, as it were. This division grows at the expense both of the "aristocrats of labor" and of the common mob which still vegetates, helpless and hopeless. We have already seen that the laboring proletariat is constantly increasing; we know, further, that it tends more and more to set the pace in thought and feeling for the other working classes. We now see that in this growing mass of workers the militant division increases not only absolutely but relatively. No matter how fast the proletariat may grow, this militant division of it grows still faster.

But it is precisely this militant proletariat which is the most fruitful recruiting ground for Socialism. The Socialist movement is nothing more than the part

of this militant proletariat which has become conscious of its goal. In fact, these two, socialism and the militant proletariat, tend constantly to become identical. In Germany and Austria their identity is already an accomplished fact.

There can be no question of the truth of this statement, *speaking in terms of infinity*. If nothing else happens, of course, the process itself will dispose of the exclusiveness of the trades unions. In the meantime, however, the trades unions are an effective bar to progress in the industrial field and whenever they go into politics in their own account they leave the traces of their small trader footprints. It would appear that no successful move by the proletariat, and consequently by the Socialists, can be made as long as the present form of trade union organization exists. It must go out of existence or become so transformed as to be unrecognizable. To this conclusion the Socialists have been slowly but inevitably driven by their experiences in the United States and it is generally recognized, among Marxists at least, that the present trade union organization with its craft form and its small business ideals is perhaps the greatest obstacle in the path of proletarian progress at present. We may, therefore, eliminate the highly skilled and well organized mechanic of today as a part of the revolutionary proletariat.

There is also a vast mass of floating proletarians, who belong to what is generally called unskilled labor. They are driven to and fro according to the demands of the labor market and constitute a most important body, particularly in the far west. In fact, the whole plan of de-

velopment of that part of the country is dependent upon them. They are engaged in first this business and then that. In the summer they are in the fields working on the farms or ranches, and in the winter large numbers flock into the cities, there to add to the already overflowing supply of undifferentiated labor. The roads are full of them at some seasons. They are not tramps in the general acceptation; in fact, they are not tramps at all, except so far as they are frequently obliged to travel on foot from place to place in search of work. They are objects of persecution and graft to the police and the authorities of the small towns. They are subjected to many indignities, in some places they are doomed to the rock-pile and the jail, not because of what they have done, but because of what they are. Occasionally a city owns a municipal quarry, used to provide stones for road mending. The advent of the migratory work-seeker of the variety described affords a good chance to the municipality to acquire able-bodied labor for next to nothing and a charge of vagrancy is sustained against a friendless and obviously harmless person as soon as made. Hence the city gets its municipal work done by police-guarded vagrants at the nominal cost of three prison meals a day.

This class of proletarians, of course, has no vote. They never fulfil the residential qualifications, hence, they are unable to play any role in proletarian revolt at the ballots. They have hitherto been ignored as a possible force tending towards the social revolution. Their apparent isolation from ordinary life, their nomadic habits,

their fluidity would seem to prohibit their taking any important part in that sequence of events called the revolution. But of late these unskilled and fluid laborers are showing some very marked efforts in the direction of successful organization. In many cases they have raised the price of farm labor, and have had a distinct effect upon the rate of wages for rough labor. They seem to be sorting themselves out and giving themselves distinctive names, such as "rough-necks," all of which tend to show a movement toward self-realization. At present, their efforts are largely confined to making possible their organization and to securing the right of free speech for themselves, which, of course, is a necessary preliminary to their active organization. Even so, their progress has been very marked of late, and it is a distinct gain to the proletariat that a portion of it, which in the very close past could have been ill treated and imprisoned with impunity, is now able to compel the municipalities to allow its members ordinary citizen rights.

A few years ago no one would have ventured to describe this class as likely to contribute notably to the revolutionary movement. Now, however, opinions could not be so positively delivered on that point and the migratory unskilled laborer, as he is called in trade union circles, may yet be a most powerful force in the Socialist direction.

The intellectual proletariat so called is generally reckoned among Socialist writers as a potential force, at least, for the revolution. This class has come into existence as a result of the

necessary demand for intellectual workers in the modern process. The widespread education has greatly increased the numbers struggling for a precarious livelihood in the professions. The vast numbers of educated have tended to decrease the average returns for professional work so that as a whole the so-called professional workers do not occupy a much higher plane economically than do the skilled handworkers. It is quite doubtful if as a body they are actually as well off. As Kautsky very aptly points out men were once accustomed to speak of the "aristocracy of intellect," but now they talk of the "educated proletariat."

It must be admitted that the earlier Socialists had expected more from the educated classes than they have received. It was confidently believed that men of training and ability from the middle class would be driven into the Socialist ranks and could and would aid in securing victory. But a scant minority of this class, however, comes into the Socialist movement, and such as comes is, generally speaking, of but dubious value. The most part consists of those who are unable to succeed in their chosen vocations in the world. They stand on practically the same footing as the unsuccessful small business man who, failing, comes in to the Socialist movement. This minority which comes in is a broken minority, generally bankrupt, not only economically but intellectually as well. It is not the stuff out of which a strong, energetic, fighting body can be built. Its affiliations with the old system are too strong, its ideas are already fixed, and fixed wrong, before it comes into the move-

ment. It has given and gives more trouble than any other element, and almost all the backsliding, all the hypocrisies, and all the surrenders made in the name of politics in the Socialist movement have been brought about by just this element.

The curse of the Socialist movement is the small trader and the professional man, the sentimental failures, who have lost their footing in the world and who persist in dreaming of a Socialist Kingdom of Heaven. It is impossible to make Socialists, who can stand up and fight, out of beaten material. There is much truth in the street slang that a beaten man cannot "come back," and those who have suffered all the agony inflicted by economic defeat are not such as prove valuable recruits, at least for a militant campaign. This "mercantile and intellectual proletariat," as it has been called, is generally without morals, discipline or force. Indeed the life of the average middle class man is lacking in precisely these qualities, and they are qualities essential to a revolutionary movement. On the other hand these elements are the source of all those weaknesses in the Socialist movement which occasionally make it the sport of its enemies as well as the despair of its friends. It is to the so-called intellectual proletariat that we have to trace the sham altruism, the maudlin note, the whipped dog whimper, which too frequently manifests itself in the revolutionary literature and speeches. For, the intellectual proletarians labor under the disadvantage that they are not and never have been producers. Clergymen, lawyers, writers and newspaper men are, generally speaking, hangers on. They live for

the favor of other people and grow into the habit of adapting manners of thought and expression accommodated to those upon whom they look for economic support. It is obvious that such material is not well calculated to make stalwart fighters. Attention has been called to the same phenomenon in Europe. Thus Paul Lafargue (*Socialism and the Intellectuals*, Kerr—Chicago) says: "Jaures in his preface to the *Socialist History of France* says that the intellectual bourgeoisie offended by a brutal and commercial society and disenchanted with the bourgeois power is rallying to the support of socialism. Unfortunately nothing could be less exact. This transformation of the intellectual faculties into merchandise, which ought to have filled the intellectuals with wrath and indignation, leaves them indifferent. * * * To sell their intellectual merchandise has become in turn such an all-absorbing principle, that if one speaks to them of socialism, before they inquire into its theories, they ask whether in the Socialist society intellectual labor will be paid for and whether it will be regarded equally with manual labor."

Lafargue discovers that the intellectuals in France pursue the same tactics as they have been discovered to follow in this country. He says:

These intellectuals propose to modify the tactics, as well as the theories of the socialist party; they wish to impose upon it a new method of action. It must no longer strive to conquer the public powers by a great struggle, legal or revolutionary, as need may be, but let itself be conquered by every ministry of a republican coalition; it is no longer to oppose the socialist party to all the bourgeois parties; what is needed is

to put it at the service of the liberal party; we must no longer organize it for the class struggle, but keep it ready for all the compromises of politicians. And, to further the triumph of the new method of action, they propose to disorganize the socialist party, to break up its old systems and to demolish the organizations which for twenty years have labored to give the workers a sense of their class interests and to group them in a party of economic and political struggle.

It is true that the same writer laments the absence of the intellectuals from the Socialist movement. He declares that the interests of intellectual and proletarian are alike anti-capitalistic and declares:

United in production, united under the yoke of capitalist exploitation, united they should be also in revolt against the common enemy. The intellectuals, if they understood their own real interests, would come in crowds to socialism, not through philanthropy, nor through pity for the miseries of the workers, not through affectation and snobbery, but to save themselves, to assure the future welfare of their wives and children, to fulfill their duty to their class. They ought to be ashamed of being left behind in the social battle by their comrades in the manual category. They have many things to teach them, but they have still much to learn from them; the workingmen have a practical sense superior to theirs, and have given proof of an instinctive intuition of the communist tendencies of modern capitalism, which is lacking to the intellectuals, who have only been able by a conscious mental effort to arrive at this conception. If only they had understood their own interests, they would long since have turned against the capitalist class the education which it has generously distributed in order better to exploit them; they would have utilized their intellectual capacities, which are enriching their masters, as so many improved weapons to fight capitalism and to conquer the freedom of their class, the wage-working class.

However much we may agree with Lafargue, his lament is vain, for, in general, the really use-

ful intellectual will not come into the Socialist movement until it has progressed to such a degree that he can serve the movement without materially damaging his interests.

Hence it is obvious that the intellectual cannot be regarded as a dependable factor in the revolutionary movement of the proletarian.

The proletariat in its revolutionary manifestations then, does not appear by any means as a united body. The whole proletarian army does not move en masse upon the bourgeois enemy. The revolutionary tendencies of the proletarian class must be sought in some moving force, other than the mere conglomeration covered by the generic term proletarian.

Whence then comes this force, or does it come at all? Is the Marxian notion of a proletarian revolutionary movement, spontaneously coming into being as the result of economic conditions altogether vain?

Decidedly not. There is a proletarian revolutionary movement, there is a force at work among the working class, which produces a militant attitude on the part of that class. That is a fact which cannot be ignored. Even the daily papers are filled with the accounts of its manifestations. From what portion of the working class then does this manifestation come? Who are the militant?

II

THE MILITANT PROLETARIAT

Kautsky has called attention in "The Class Struggle," from which we have quoted so often, because it is probably the best interpretation of Marxism and the Erfurt Program, to the fact that a militant body arises in the masses of the proletarians. He puts it in the following language :

Thus, there has gradually formed from skilled and unskilled workers a body of proletarians who are in the movement of labor, or the labor movement. It is the part of the proletariat which is fighting for the interests of the whole class, its church militant, as it were. This division grows at the expense both of the "Aristocrats of labor" and of the common mob which still vegetates, helpless and hopeless. We have already seen that the laboring proletariat is constantly increasing; we know, further, that it tends more and more to set the pace in thought and feeling for the other working classes. We now see, that, in this growing mass of workers, the militant division increases not only absolutely, but relatively. No matter how fast the proletariat may grow, this militant division of it grows still faster.

But, it is precisely this militant proletariat which is the most fruitful recruiting ground for socialism. The socialist movement is nothing more than the part of this militant proletariat which has become conscious of its goal. In fact, these two, socialism and the militant proletariat, tend constantly to become identical. In Germany and Austria their identity is already an accomplished fact.

This says, essentially, that among the proletarian element there is a growing body which adopts an attitude of revolt towards the existing system and that the members of this body constitute the active revolutionary part of the proletariat, which becomes Socialist. But this gives us no information as to the special marks of this revolutionary element. If it consists merely of those who are temperamentally inclined to take the radical side in a controversy, merely of those who are in the language of the street "chronic kickers," we learn nothing of value respecting its composition; for, a like proportion of discontented and radical persons would probably be found in any other portion of the population. Thus "the burden of the day" is resented by professional men and middle class people, generally, as the "Progressive" movement in this country testifies.

Every movement must have its nucleus; the central group to which the movement is economically and essentially necessary, and which exercises an influence, constantly widening, from that nucleus, in proportion to the power exercised by and the development of that nucleus. Thus, generally speaking, the interests of the shopkeeper are not the interests of the proletarian. In fact they are quite other. The classes are antagonistic and as buyer and seller they are at opposite poles and mutually in antithesis. Yet in times of strike the small shopkeeper finds his interest and that of the proletarian practically identical because the small shopkeeper maintains his existence by selling to the proletarian. Hence he profits in proportion as the proletarian im-

proves his position. The result is that we find the dealers in the districts which the working class inhabit voting the Socialist ticket in large numbers. Also in times of strike the small shopkeepers are usually on the side of the working class to whom they give credit. Thus the influence of a group may be powerful, not only over those who are directly affiliated with the group, but over those also who are dragged nolentes volentes in the direction taken by the controlling group. An admirable instance of this is seen in a Western Federation of Miners camp. Here the economic organization of the miners is in control. The whole community is dependent upon the organization, and classes which would, under other circumstances, be antagonistic to the working class are there forced into support of it, by virtue of its position.

It becomes of interest to discover what is that group in the proletariat which is militant and what influence it can exercise over the mass of proletarians, as well as the actual power which it could wield if brought into the field.

It is just here that the distinction between those European countries in which liberalism has not fully developed and the English speaking communities in which liberalism has practically attained its maximum becomes very apparent. This fact of the development of liberalism is the determining fact as regards the actual revolutionary attitude of the proletarian or that part of which is described as militant. Even the vestiges of the feudal system still remaining in Great Britain, the established church, the throne, the house of lords, the plural voting, the hun-

dred and one stupid little abuses and survivals which are so many obstacles in the path of progress all interfere to prevent that essential development of the proletariat proper into a fighting body with a mission to accomplish. In fact, as we have seen, Kautsky goes on to say forthwith: "The Socialist movement is nothing more than the part of this militant proletariat which has become conscious of its goal. In fact, those two, socialism and the militant proletariat tend constantly to become identical. In Germany and Austria, their identity is already an assured fact." But how far is the realization of the Socialist movement in the countries mentioned a proletarian manifestation proper and how far is it just a liberal demonstration which parades under the Socialist name, and pretends to threaten a proletarian revolt, whereas it really means to accomplish certain necessary bourgeois reforms?

To still further confuse the matter, Kautsky says: "To make this great mass (the working class) feel its common interests, to induce it to act as one in an organization, it is necessary to have means of communicating with large numbers. A free press and the right of assemblage are absolutely essential." It is useless to endeavor to discover how far a movement is really Socialist or proletarian in a community which does not possess the absolutely fundamental pre-requisites of a free press and free speech. These are admitted primary essentials lacking which it is difficult to conceive of any real working class movement being practical. Until such concessions, at least, are won the class war may be considered practically in abeyance, for, it is

evident that proletarian and bourgeois must unite on the same platform as regards these fundamentals. A threat of the destruction of the constitutional guarantees, or even a tendency to impair them would have in this country the effect of merging together whole masses of people who would in reality have nothing more in common than the preservation of bourgeois liberties, and who, when their purpose was achieved would find themselves divided by varying economic and consequently political interests.

When one contemplates the political blurriness of the European countries with the clearness of the United States as regards politics, it will be seen that there is no standard by which we can measure the relative strength of the militant proletariat in the two hemispheres.

There is no question that the political work of liberalism must be accomplished and got out of the way before any new and peculiarly socialist departure is possible. This can be readily seen in the English Parliament where the Independent Labor Party, ostensibly returned to look after the interests of the working class and to be the representative of the militant proletarian, as a matter of fact, becomes tied to the Liberal Party and spends most of its time and effort in carrying out bourgeois reforms.

Up to this point the path of the proletarian is not difficult, no questions of any great moment calling for any particular statesmanship in the conduct of the agitation actually appear. It is easy to declare the policy of the proletarian to be the keeping of his own political organization and the working out of necessary political

bourgeois measures in which the socialist party represents the combined interests of the proletarian class and of many bourgeois. Thus in speaking of the relative values of political and economic movement Kautsky says: "The fact is that the two cannot be separated. The economic struggle demands political rights and these will not fall from heaven. To receive and maintain them the most vigorous political action is necessary. The political struggle is, on the other hand, in the last analysis, an economic struggle. Often, in fact, it is directly and openly economic, as when it deals with tariff and factory laws. The political struggle is merely a political form of the economic struggle, in fact its most inclusive and vital form." All of which reads admirably but in reality does not amount to much, at least as a guide, in determining the nature of the militant proletariat in the United States and its plan of campaign. For that which Kautsky expects to achieve by politics seems already to have been achieved here without working class political intervention, and, for the rest, tariff laws do not bear practically upon the economic condition of the working class, neither is such factory legislation as has been secured in any way dependent upon the action of the militant proletariat. He claims parliamentarism an essential to the working class because great capitalists can influence legislators directly, but the proletariat only by a show of electoral force. In this country, however, where political charlatanry and the trade of vote-catching has developed into a fine art, the professional politician can detect the slightest popular move-

ment, and he forthwith begins to lay his schemes to take advantage of it, for the furtherance of his own personal advancement, independent of other considerations.

Kautsky also claims that parliamentarism on the part of the proletariat tends to change the character of parliament itself and is "the most powerful lever to raise the proletariat out of its economic, social and moral degradation." All of which appears by the way to be a mere begging of the question, for such results do not actually seem to have followed so-called proletarian political action as far as we know it. In fact, the general conclusion which Kautsky reaches is so lame as to be altogether unworthy of the strength and directness which we are accustomed to associate with that author. It is thus expressed: "Besides freedom of the press and the right to organize, the universal ballot is to be regarded as one of the conditions prerequisite to a sound development of the proletariat."

In the United States we have practically all of these. It is true that occasionally we have to complain of governmental aggressions, and that there is a relatively increasing number of citizens who do not have the ballot, also that the later naturalization laws tend to make it more difficult to become citizens, but on the whole at the present we may safely claim to be fully in possession of those valuable prerequisites to proletarian action.

Still the question of militant proletarian action is a burning one, and the American proletarian movement by no means so simple and strong, in spite of these manifest advantages, that we

can easily and readily define its line of march.

Occasionally, we have a victory of what would be generally considered as the proletariat, and in Australia there is actually a working class government in full control of the Commonwealth. There exists a body of wage earners, with what would seem to be a class movement. They have the economic power, for labor is so well organized that it can practically control the situation in Australia. They have obviously the political power, for they are admittedly in control of the government. If there ever was an opportunity for showing the transforming influence of the proletarian upon government, Australia has certainly had that opportunity. We do not find, however, any signs of a change which would predispose us to regard with particular favor such manifestations as have occurred in a British Parliament by virtue of the introduction, or rather the domination of what Kautsky would unquestionably have called the proletarian element. Is the Australian Commonwealth Government to be regarded as a type of government by the militant proletariat? If so, the whole matter might as well be relegated to the dust heap of profitless discussion, for the Labor Government of Australia rises no higher than other governments, in that it carefully and scrupulously enforces law for the benefit of the dominant capitalism. Call it by what name you will, the government of today is the expression of the dominant economic force, that is, the force of the greater capitalism, and no government, whatever its pretensions, can be more than that. Whether it be Aristide Briand, using all the

powers of government for the suppression of the general strike, or an Australian Commonwealth Government, employing all the resources of governmental organization against strikers, even to the extent of imprisoning them for refusing to handle scab materials, the results are the same. They do not seem to differ very much, moreover, from those which we witness in other communities of less pretensions, and where the governments are more or less frankly the exponents of the same dominant economic power.

It does not seem to be so much a matter of names as of attitude of mind. To call a labor party into existence upon a political basis is merely to give political expression to the economic interests of the labor organizations which have combined for political purposes. The careless observer might be tempted to assume that the individuals combining would of necessity have the working class point of view and to predict that (the working class attitude of mind being naturally antagonistic to the capitalistic) the working class movement, so called, would by sheer force of its own propulsion, find itself a socialist movement, having for its object the destruction of the existing system. But no such thing really occurs. As a matter of fact, a trade union organization converted into a political party rises no higher than its trade union conception. This is, as we have said already, that the relation of employer and employe is a purely contractual relation in which the employer owns the tools and the employe owns the labor power.

It is obvious that when this is translated into politics, such a party may easily be of actual

service to the employing class and this indeed has happened on many occasions. In fact, it is happening continually in those parts of the world where the capitalists can the better carry out their plans by means of a labor party. Even the actual socialist movement, so-called, need by no means constitute a militant proletariat. In fact, the socialist movement might be, and, indeed, is in some places, notably in the United States, not a movement of the militant proletariat at all, but one in which petit-bourgeois and trade unionists find a common ground of political action, and which cannot be differentiated in any important respects from the labor parties elsewhere, as we have described them. In fact so slight is the difference, that in California, where a Union Labor Party has been in control of the City of San Francisco, and the Socialist Party has shown a tendency to increase its vote in the State, strong representations have been made that an amalgamation of the two elements would be good for both, although the Union Labor Party is not only essentially conservative, having progressed no further than the old and well worn idea of fair play between capital and labor, but is actually playing the game and furthering the interests of the great capitalism in the city of San Francisco.

We must evidently go further than names if we desire to find the militant proletariat. In fact these conditions are actually typical of what is going on all over the world. There seems to be what one might call the outer shell of an ostensibly labor and so called socialist movement, hiding a distinctly bourgeois and compromising

kernel. We find the same phenomenon in France, in Italy, in Australia, as well as in the United States.

There is besides this expression, however, of the craft unions and the small business men, who, after all, constitute the bulk of so-called labor and socialist parties, a certain nucleus which is forming noticeably at the present time. Sometimes it lives inside the so-called socialist and labor parties, particularly in countries which have imperfectly developed from the feudal State, as Germany. There, as has been already pointed out, all sections of the radicals must of necessity work together for the abolition of the remains of feudalism, and until the liberalistic work, which should never have fallen to the task of the Socialist Party, is accomplished, the peculiar work of the Socialist movement cannot be taken up. In other places, such as France, there is a distinct revolutionary nucleus outside of the Socialist movement, so-called, at least outside of that movement, as politically expressed. The same facts are found in most other modern countries. Even in Australia, a Socialist movement grows and spreads outside of the dominant labor party, and the same is true of the United States.

Here the Socialist Party, which has developed with great rapidity, takes on more and more the form of the labor parties as developed elsewhere, with a remnant of the revolutionary idealism which is associated with the European Social Democratic Parties. Only of late has it, however, become markedly popular with the trade union bodies and only in certain localities merely. Still, as the numerical importance of the party in-

creases and its chances of gaining votes grow, it tends to become more popular with the organized labor bodies and as they come into it it mirrors to a more complete degree the political ambitions of the craft unionists and thus tends to become less revolutionary and more political. Outside of this party other groups are forming. These tend, by virtue largely of reaction against the bourgeoisization of the Socialist Party, to adopt a non-political attitude in the beginning, which, not infrequently, becomes an actually anti-political attitude. Such, however, must in the nature of the case be but transitory. They call more particularly for industrial action for the purpose of producing direct economic effects of a revolutionary nature. But such economic effects when once produced must of necessity produce their political reflex. It cannot be otherwise.

In their ranks the militant proletariat must be found. Here we must look for the realization of the proletariat as thus described in the "Communist Manifesto." Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the case of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

THE MACHINE PROLETARIAT

The statement at the close of the last section, to the effect that the proletariat is the special and essential product of modern industry, should be considered as a starting point for discussion of the moving revolutionary force. In fact when we more closely examine the statement we see that this is practically the sole basis of the So-

cialist contention stripped of propaganda glamor and unnecessary rhetoric. The contention is essentially as follows: A given society produces its own destruction by the operation of economic forces in that society, which cannot be avoided, but which are inherent in that form of society. A new class comes into existence in terms of the conditions this generated and this class causes the overthrow of the former dominant class. The most striking instance is, of course, the overturn of the feudal nobility by the bourgeoisie, which was a product of feudalism, developing out of it, and finally destroying it. In the same way the proletariat has developed as the result of the present system, and is held to be the destroyer of the existing ruling class.

The mere fact of the existence of a proletariat, however, by no means forces the conclusion that such a class is, of necessity, revolutionary, still less does it follow automatically that the class will be victorious in its revolutionary attempt, even granting it the revolutionary state of mind. In fact, the teaching of history would seem to point to failure rather than success as the result of the revolutionary operations of the so-called proletariat, and that, so far at least, the proletariat, as a whole, cannot be brought into the field.

* [But it is certain also that there is a militant nucleus in that proletarian mass, for we see daily evidences of it. Also we know that a nucleus is sufficient, provided that its interests and its mental structure are antagonistic to and irreconcilable with the existing regime so as to form a revolutionary core around which might

gather and organize elements and groups otherwise unorganizable. So that by virtue of the organization at the center the whole mass might be projected against the governmental forces, the movement being precipitated by probably some momentary or trivial cause, and what is called a revolution occur.

Of course, that occurrence is not in itself the revolution. It is only the last act in a series of acts tending to produce the definitive result, the end of a process which has on the one hand contributed continually to weaken the possessing class and on the other hand to swell the strength of the attacking forces. There may be so-called revolutions for which all this preliminary organization and the existence of a strong nucleus do not appear to be necessary. Such, however, will be found not to be revolutionary movements proper, but what are called "palace revolutions" merely. These are such as involve a mere change in the personnel of the government, but do not imply a fundamental change in the social structure such as is involved in the triumph of one economic class over another. Such, to all appearances, at present writing (May, 1911), is the so-called revolutionary movement in Mexico. A change of government, the result of which would be the substitution of Madero for Diaz, could not be other than a "palace revolution." But there are also involved in the Mexican disturbances the economic demands of numbers of Mexican peasants who require the abolition of peonage and the security to themselves of sufficient land to enable them to live independently. This latter class forms the real economic

basis of a Mexican revolution, and its victory would have distinct governmental effects, for, besides involving the economic fact of the destruction of the great estates, the political effect would be seen in the assumption of governmental functions by the new small land proprietors. This would necessarily give an entirely different complexion to a government which is now conducted exclusively in the interests of the large landholders and high finance.

Each revolution is made fundamentally by a typical class produced by the conditions against which the revolution is conducted. The peculiar product of the existing regime overthrows it. A class of semi-independent yeomen and still more independent burghers who had grown up in the lap of the feudal system formed the nucleus of that force which overthrew the feudal system and enabled the regenerating revolutionists to develop into the bourgeois tyrants of today.

The question, therefore, which must be answered before anything can be predicted of the success of the social revolution is, how far have the bourgeois conditions actually produced a class sufficiently differentiated from the dominant type, to form a revolutionary nucleus? Then inquiry must be made into the potentialities of this class as a revolutionary force.

The general and very unsatisfactory reply of the ordinary Socialist agitator to the question. Who will make the revolution? is, the People. This People notion is a pious legacy bequeathed to him, religiously passed on in church and school, and never questioned or analyzed. The bourgeois revolution sanctified itself as a popular

revolution and incessantly paraded the People as the source of its authority and the moving impulse of its action. The word, as victory was achieved, came to have a certain sanctity which was exaggerated in the case of some of the later revolutionists, like Mazzini, into a kind of mysticism. The People were then sufficiently to be differentiated from the rulers to make a distinct body, with identity of interests, in terms of which they could fight, and which would form the foundations of government should the People succeed. As a matter of fact, those interests have been made the foundations of the laws of modern states. It is by appeal to these old demands expanded and idealized that the so-called reformers of the present day claim that they will be able to abolish the tyranny of the great and restore republican conditions in an oligarchy of wealth. But the so-called People no longer exists for political purposes. The People is no entity except as regards the inviolability of the national soil, and since the anti-militaristic campaign has spread so widely and so fast, it is questionable if it is an effective entity even for that purpose.

The essentials of a revolutionary class are that it should have sprung from the conditions against which it rebels, that it should have economic interests antagonistic to those of the governing class, and the other condition follows that its mode of thought and expression should be other than those typical of the conditions against which the revolution is to be directed.

These characteristics are the essential marks of a victorious revolutionary class. Without them

a discontented body, merely dissatisfied with things as they are, can achieve nothing because its demands have no real point of differentiation from the existing conditions, and because, in spite of the poverty of the members of the revolting class, its mental viewpoint and its ethics are those of the dominant class. Hence, we find that mere riots and tumults, Jacqueries, and trades union risings like those in Barcelona, and, to a more limited degree, in this country, have accomplished nothing of any permanent value. They have been just hunger rebellions, lacking cohesive power, and the great impulse of a common idea, lacking also the unbridgable separation between the mind of the rebels and the mind of the masters, a separation which becomes an antagonism irreconcilable and complete, owing to the psychological conditions produced by the existence of the actual economic fact.

The same may be said of the Populist movement in the United States which at one time bid fair to be a powerful revolt movement. Its call to all the producers might have had some political effect, save for the fact that the return of fairly good times and a sudden improvement in the condition of the farmer destroyed the fundamental basis of what was after all largely a hunger movement.

The economic fact, on each side of which the opposing classes are arrayed, produces psychological results on each of those classes which render them more and more antagonistic and their mutual agreement continually less possible. We have seen, for example, in the history of the breakup of the feudal system, how the develop-

ment of the middle class and the economic fact which gave rise to it deepened and accentuated the antagonism between the feudal nobility and the bourgeoisie, until compromise was practically impossible.

Given the militant nucleus which tends towards revolution, does the present system produce such an economic fact as to render antagonism on each side of that fact complete, and is the fact so essential to the modern system as to be indispensable? If so, what is that fact?

There is one essential and indispensable economic fact in the existing system peculiar to it and inseparable from it. This fact produces psychological effects, which are mutually antagonistic and which render agreement between the parties on each side of the fact impossible and which, moreover, produce a revolutionary mental state in the mind of the subject of the economic fact. That fact is the machine process.

The machine process has been discussed by numerous modern writers, notably by Cook Taylor in his "Modern Factory System" and more briefly, but far more effectively, by Thorstein Veblen in his "The Theory of Business Enterprise" (Scribners). This latter is, in the opinion of the present writer, one of the most brilliant works on this and kindred subjects.

The machine-process is thus defined:

Whenever manual dexterity, the rule of thumb, and the fortuitous conjunctures of the seasons have been supplanted by a reasoned procedure on the basis of a systematic knowledge of the forces employed, there the mechanical industry is to be found, even in the absence of intricate mechanical contrivances. It is a

question of the character of the process rather than a question of the complexity of the contrivances employed. Chemical, agricultural, and animal industries, as carried on by the characteristically modern methods and in due touch with the market, are to be included in the modern complex of mechanical industry.

The machine-process implies standardization which as a result has produced a great social gain as regards celerity and efficiency, and hence a wonderful saving in the expenditure of labor. "What is not competently standardized calls for too much of craftsmanlike skill, reflection and individual elaboration, and is therefore not available for economical use in the processes. Irregularity, departure from standard measurements in any of the measurable facts, is of itself a fault in any item that is to find a use in the industrial process, for it brings delay, it detracts from its ready usability in the nicely adjudged process into which it is to go; and a delay at any point means a more or less far-reaching and intolerable retardation of the comprehensive industrial process at large. Irregularity in products intended for industrial use carries a penalty to the nonconforming producer which urges him to fall into line and submit to the required standardization."

The result is not only the subjection of the workman to the standardization process of the machine, but also the elimination of the idiosyncrasies and private desires of the purchaser, the general public, who are obliged to take the standardized products of the machine process.

This machine production, Veblen also points out, leads to a standardization of services.

Thus, to quote still further:

To make effective use of the modern system of communication in any or all of its ramifications (streets, railways, steamship lines, telephone, telegraph, postal service, etc.) men are required to adapt their needs and their motions to the exigencies of the process whereby this civilized method of intercourse is carried into effect. The service is standardized, and therefore the use of it is standardized also. Schedules of time, place and circumstance rule throughout. The scheme of everyday life must be arranged with a strict regard to the exigencies of the process whereby this range of human needs is served, if full advantage is to be taken of this system of intercourse, which means that, in so far, one's plans and projects must be conceived and worked out in terms of those standard units which the system imposes.

In addition to this standardization, what is called by Professor Veblen "Interstitial Adjustment" is very marked. Thus the various factors in the production of a given industry are obliged to accommodate themselves one to the other, and the more highly developed the industry happens to be the more dependent is it for its successful conduct upon the correlation of these parts. Hence, the dislocation of any of its sub-processes in the general scheme of machine production tends to dislocate the entire system and causes a general disturbance in that particular industry which, owing to the close relations between industries, due again to the machine process, will spread outside of the sphere of the industry in question and very soon affect the whole social process. In short, as Professor Veblen says, "This mechanical concatenation of industrial processes makes for solidarity in the administration of any group of related industries, and more remotely it makes for solidarity in the management of the entire

industrial traffic of the community." (N. B. This statement should be carefully borne in mind when the matter of industrial unionism is considered.) The result of all this organization and concatenation of industries and correlated industries is that industrial effort is directed towards, and industrial leadership is best displayed in the management of the industries so as to keep the adjustments of the system as perfect as possible, to maintain the running of the entire process undisturbed by defective working of the inter-related parts.

This is the new system, the peculiar product of the present age, and it is under this new system that we must look for that revolutionary proletariat, that nucleus of militants, which is to supply the propulsive force of social revolution, if it is to be found anywhere.

The growth and development of this machine industry, as a matter of fact, constitutes a condition in the socialist and labor movement which could not have been contemplated even by the far-seeing and erudite exponents of the Marxian idea. It is true that the Communist Manifesto states, "Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to division of labor, the work of the proletarians has lost all individual character, and consequently all charm for the workman. He becomes an appendage of the machine," and refers to the equalizing tendency of the machine system upon wages and conditions of life. All of which is very striking when the early period at which the "Manifesto" was written is considered. But the machine process as it is today did not and never could have entered the minds of the writers

of the "Manifesto." In fact, they unquestionably thought that the whole system, as they knew it, would have been destroyed and the Socialist Republic established long before industry had attained the present heights of development, and the machine-process had come to be the all dominant power it now is.

After all, in the earlier stages the Socialist propaganda was directed to the proletariat in the small industry and proved fruitless to a great extent because the necessary stage of economic development had not been reached, and so the mind of the proletariat was not prepared to accept it. Such Socialism as was propagated was of the "natural rights" sort, which took as its basis the principles of the bourgeois victory and regarded Socialism as merely an extension of these.

From this class of propaganda we get the demand that each worker shall have the full product of his toil, a demand which is really ridiculous in face of the highly concentrated and intricate machinery of today, and the ridiculousness of which, in terms of modern conditions, is abundantly shown in the standardization of wages as the result of union labor agitation. It is evident that this Socialism is the product of the small store and the small shop. Indeed, today it finds its adherents for the most part among the small business men, farmers, and those craftsmen who have so far remained largely unaffected by the machine process.

The machine process produces psychological effects upon those who follow it which go to the making of a distinct type and aid the forma-

tion of a proletariat distinctively peculiar to the present era. Irreligion and impatience of external restraint have been noted as peculiarities of the city proletariat which is the special product of the machine process. Lafargue points out that the irreligion of the machine proletariat is largely due to his being brought in his daily work into relation with mechanical processes where cause and effect are intimately and inseparably related, that the processes of nature, so mysterious and inexplicable, such as birth, growth, etc., which meet the agriculturist at every turn, must of necessity tend to produce a mind more attuned to mysticism and religion than is possible to the experience of the modern artisan. The essential psychological difference between those engaged in business and those who come under the influence of the machine process is thus stated by Veblen in the work to which reference has been already made:

The ultimate ground of validity for the thinking of the business classes is the natural rights ground of property,—a conventional, anthropomorphic fact having an institutional validity, rather than a matter-of-fact validity such as can be formulated in terms of material cause and effect; while the classes engaged in the machine industry are habitually occupied with matters of causal sequence, which do not lend themselves to statement in anthropomorphic terms of natural rights and which afford no guidance in questions of institutional right and wrong, or of conventional reason and consequence. Arguments which proceed on material cause and effect cannot be met with arguments from conventional precedent or dialectically sufficient reason, and conversely.

On the positive side Veblen is at least as pronounced. He says:

The discipline of the modern industrial employments is relatively free from the basis of conventionality, but the difference between the mechanical and the business occupations is a difference of degree. It is not simply that conventional standards of certainty fall into abeyance for lack of exercise, among the industrial classes. The positive discipline exercised by their work in good part runs counter to the habit of thinking in conventional, anthropomorphic terms, whether the conventionality is that of natural rights or any other. And in respect of this positive training away from conventional norms, there is a large divergence between the several lines of industrial employment. In proportion as a given line of employment has more of the character of a machine process and less of the character of handicraft, the matter of fact training which it gives is more pronounced. In a sense more intimate than the inventors of the phrase seem to have appreciated, the machine has become the master of the man who works with it and an arbiter in the cultural fortunes of the community into whose life it has entered.

It does not appear that any serious and effective attack can be made upon the validity of these conclusions. In fact, we find them acknowledged freely in the religious and conservative press, where exactly these characteristics are made the subject of attack and are taken as illustrative of the degree to which we have degenerated as the result of modern conditions.

Not only archaic and surviving ethical conceptions are fast being obliterated by the action of the machine process, but the very elementary virtues which were regarded as primary and essential from the bourgeois point of view are coming to be despised. Hence, thrift, an essential small bourgeois virtue, is disappearing in

view of the machine process development. This is a direct result of the mobility of the worker's life under the machine industry. As a laborer he is part of an intricate machine and must always be usable. He is in fact, as one would say of the mechanical parts of the machine itself, standardized and must be available whenever required in the process. Hence he can have but little impedimenta, as such would interfere with the freedom of his movements. So that thrift disappears, not owing to the wicked and wanton extravagance of the working class, as the clergy and editors are eager to declare, but by virtue of the very necessities of the machine process itself. In connection with this absence of thrift it may be noted that the migratory farm laborers do not save money even during their period of employment. Starting in Southern California, where large numbers of them hibernate, they move north with the crops. They spend their wages on the best food obtainable, first-class steaks, and good meals. They spend what a country dweller not accustomed to the machine process would consider an extravagant amount upon physical necessities. But experience has shown them that this is after all their most economical way of living. In order to take their place in the machine process, and to perform the work which the system requires of them, they must be in the best physical condition with all the strength of which they are capable. To keep this condition necessitates the expenditure of what otherwise might be considered an extravagant amount on food. But there is no alternative—no expenditure, no job.

It is also pointed out that the distinctive effects of the machine process upon the mind of those engaged in it is to lead to a denial of the natural rights' doctrine which lies at the base of the common law and the whole political and juridical system of the English speaking countries. The workers engaged in the machine process deny the right of individual freedom to contract on the part of the worker with the employer; they deny also the right of the employer to carry on his own business in his own way.

Here there is also an approach to that standardization which is apparent in the machine process. It is very obvious that the idea of individual bargaining is practically impossible under the machine industry and that it would tend to interfere with the smooth working and the correlation of the parts of that industry which we have seen to be essential to its satisfactory conduct. In fact, so far has the machine process acted upon the minds of the parties on each side of it that there is hardly any employer worth considering in industry affected by the machine process, who does not see the advantage of collective bargaining. It has advanced so far as to receive legislative and judicial sanction in Great Britain and those outlying portions of the British Empire in which the modern system prevails. The Civic Federation in this country, a highly influential, if unofficial committee of capitalists and trade unionists, takes the same attitude. In fact, a properly organized and amenable trade union is considered almost essential as part of the capitalist equipment. It is obviously necessary to the maintaining of that adjustment ("In-

terstitial Adjustment," Veblen calls it) which the machine process demands. Hence the machine process itself is apparently such as to work an entire change in the concepts underlying bourgeois society and may be regarded as a revolutionary and subversive economic fact, like the rise of trade and the substitution of money—rents for payment by feudal service in the feudal system.

The machine process, moreover, tends to widen the gulf between the possessing and the revolutionary classes and to make the passage from the subject to the owning class continually more difficult. In the prior stage the evolution from man to master was usual. Where it did not take place the man was so frequently to be blamed for lack of the elementary qualities of success that his failure was naturally imputed to himself, and even he felt that it was largely his own fault. The classes fitted together so closely and the level was so well kept that a young energetic man was no misfit husband for the daughter of the master. In fact there was no real gulf between master and servant. But the foundation of the greater industry with its machine process, with its corporations and trusts, its absent stockholders, its graded and disciplined organization, accentuates markedly the fact of subject and master, and produces, on the other hand, feelings of haughtiness and pride, of arrogance and superiority, together with a sense of material, coupled with political power, and on the other hand that recognition of subjection and hopeless endeavor which is the most fruitful immediate source of revolutionary action.

Moreover, the proletariat, or at least that nucleus of it which we have pointed out as being engaged in the machine process, actually does tend to become more and more revolutionary, that is, to take up a continually more iconoclastic attitude to the natural rights theories. Veblen says, "The latest, maturest expressions of trade unionism are on the whole the most extreme, in so far as they are directed against the natural rights of property and pecuniary contract."

True as this was in 1904, when the first edition of the work was published, the last seven years have proved still more forcibly the accuracy of this general expression. The trades unions, even those which were most conservative and yielded less readily to the influence of the machine process and which retained the impress of the preceding system longer, have begun to give way more and more to the influence of the machine process. This shows that as the old members of the unions pass away the old mental attitude passes also, and that the new men, the young who take their places in the unions, or who are sufficiently adventurous to form new labor organizations, come into them with concepts derived from the machine process and are thus more radical or iconoclastic. They proclaim the "standardization of industry" as against that "standardization of business" (Veblen), which is incorporated in the common law, not, it is true, in its fullness, because the vestiges of the old still remain and the subject class has as usual retained the traditions of the former epoch to a greater extent than its masters.

Each succeeding wave of unionism and of working class effort, however, places the working class standard in advance of its predecessors and always in greater accord with the operation of the machine process upon the working class mind. Wherever this tendency is obvious the machine proletariat will be found, and there will be seen the effects of the operation of the machine process. Thus the old system of agriculture affords no psychological ground for the development of a revolutionary class movement among the agricultural laborers. But the conversion of the old-fashioned farmhand into the modern farm laborer, a cog in the machine process, very soon converts that apparently most hopeless of industrial subjects into material for organization. So that the Industrial Workers of the World, the most advanced product of the machine process and a form of unionism absolutely inconceivable in any state of industrial development anterior to that of a fully grown machine process, has partially succeeded in organizing the migratory farm laborers and in causing them to win strikes and to greatly increase the price of their labor.

It must be remembered also in this connection, that the numbers of those organized are but a small proportion of those affected. The resources of the new organization referred to are too slight to enable them to enter upon any greater field of organization at present than their staff and equipment permit. Thousands of requests for organization have come in from the rural districts which could not be acceded to as the organization was not prepared to enter upon the task which this extended scope necessarily pre-

sented. This is evidence in itself of the action of the machine process upon that part of the proletariat which Veblen speaks of as unaffected. Indeed, the same proletariat in Europe is unaffected simply because the machine process in agriculture in Europe has not attained the importance it has achieved here. *It may be noted that the machine process is not at work to any extent in farming proper.* The machine process goes chiefly to handling the crop and it is in just that particular work that the industrial organizable qualities of the new agricultural proletariat are beginning to show themselves. In other words, those wandering hordes, the despair of politician and reformer, are being gradually made into an organized whole by virtue of nothing but the machine process itself and its psychological effect upon the units of these hordes.

The same may be said of other classes of labor which come under the influence of the machine process, and especially of unskilled labor, which, formerly, having its craft to protect, was practically hopeless from the organization standpoint. The machine process, however, develops the revolutionary state of mind even in this proportion of the proletariat, so that the foreign unskilled laborers in the machine process are fast learning the art of organization, as the growth of the United Laborers' Unions (composed of migratory unskilled laborers) in the American Federation of Labor plainly shows, and as is further evidenced by the remarkable continued increase in numbers and influence of the Industrial Workers of the World. This latter as has been noted is at once the most revolutionary of

modern unions, and is composed almost entirely at the present time of elements which had hitherto been considered unorganizable.

The operation of the machine process explains a phenomenon, which seems to find no satisfactory solution except in terms of the psychological effects of the process in question. It is found that speaking generally the economically better situated class of workers is more amenable to the Socialist propaganda than those less well off. Thus according to the analysis of the membership of the Socialist Party published in the Socialist Bulletin for April, 1909, it appears that 20 per cent are laborers and 41 per cent craftsmen. Of course the laborers are economically worse off than the craftsmen and might therefore be expected to be more revolutionary in tendency. Occasionally the Socialist driven to an explanation ventures the assertion that it is just because the craftsmen are better off that they take an interest in the Socialist movement. He says that the hours of the craftsman being fewer, his leisure greater, and his opportunities of self-improvement better, he becomes more intellectual and consequently more inclined to Socialism. This explanation has never been satisfactory, although it appears to correspond fairly well with the facts. For example, the question remains why should some certain classes of craftsmen be more amenable than others to Socialism? It will be found that the socialistic craftsmen are for by far the most part participants in the machine industry and are therefore under the influence of the machine process, while, as regards the laborers, there is little doubt that

practically all of them who take part in the socialist movement do so by virtue of the psychological effect of the machine process.

There can be no doubt that Socialists regard the industrial centers as their proper hunting-grounds, and as affording to them the best opportunities for the development of a strong revolutionary movement. In fact it is axiomatic with the Socialists that their propaganda is dependent upon industrial development. Socialism requires a high degree of industrial development, which, of course, necessarily implies the machine-process. Under no other conditions can a state of mind amenable to the Socialist propaganda in its modern form be produced.

In these industrial centers, however, very distinct differences are to be observed in the classes of people attracted to the Socialist movement. Broadly speaking, they may be divided into two classes, which are denominated within the Socialist ranks as proletarian and bourgeois, respectively. The latter are really representatives of the smaller bourgeoisie not under the influence of the machine process, and the former are the products of the machine-process, generally speaking. Between those two types there is an incessant war in the Socialist movement itself, which is constantly agitated by the endeavor of the machine proletarian to obtain the upper hand. Each fight gives him a better position, as he is in accord with industrial processes and the growth of the machine industry. There is also to be observed that tendency to "Interstitial Adjustment," which has been noted by Veblen as a distinct necessity of the machine process. Just

as the machine process requires a continual adjustment of the sub-processes to meet its requirements, and to contribute to the economic result, so the working class endeavors to make its organization follow the lines of the nucleus process and to bring about those "Interstitial Adjustments" between the various elements of the labor side of the process, which the masters are continually making on the capitalist side.

Hence follows the dispute between the advocates of craft unionism and what is called industrial unionism. The chief charge of the latter against the former is that the craft unionism is not suited to the present stage of the machine process, that it is archaic, and should be abandoned. In fact, willy-nilly, it is being abandoned, and the only reason which prevents its more speedy abandonment is the natural tendency of those in office to perpetuate their tenure and to retain the emoluments. Even in the Socialist movement we find the same fundamental and essential distinctions between the types. In speaking of the non-effectiveness of the Socialist movement to affect the rural classes of Europe, Veblen explains the fact of the impermeability of the peasants as follows: "The discipline of their daily life leaves their spirit undisturbed on the plane of conventionality and anthropomorphism and the changes to which they aspire lie within the scope of the conventionalities which have grown out of the circumstances of their life and which express the habit of mind enforced by these circumstances." The same words might be applied almost without change to those in the Socialist movement who are not

subjected to the operations of the machine process.

The same characteristics which have made Methodism and kindred sects typical of the small bourgeois class pervade their socialism. They are idealistic in the long view, and small and sordid in their immediate actions. They yield readily to and are easily made the victims of pietistic adventurers who translate the old theology into terms of a pseudo-socialism. They possess in a marked degree that surviving reverence for natural rights which has been mentioned heretofore, and base their hypotheses upon it.

The machine process, however, produces a type which tends ever further away from this idealistic point of view and becomes continually more definite and concrete. This latter class troubles itself less about abstractions and busies itself more with the creation of an industrial machine through which it can actually express itself, and hence thus readily responds more to economic than to political stimulus.

As a matter of fact, the modern industrialist devotes more energy and thought to the subject of shop control than to the mere question of wages and hours. It will be noted that this is entirely distinctive from what may be called the old-fashioned proprietary form of socialism. According to this latter, the "full product of his toil" was the objective of the class-conscious worker. But the present industrialist aims at the "control of the job," in common with his fellow-workers. It is a very slight step from this to the ownership of the job, to wit: the instruments of labor. The objective may seem to be the same

in the long run, but the objective has always been the same. At every time men have desired to obtain the full return of their labor. It is the method of approach which differentiates the epochs, and the method of job control is a later development, as compared with expropriation by legal decree based on a revolutionary mandate. It will be thus found that the operation of the machine process is explanatory of much of the discussion and the strife within the Socialist movement.

There are differences, apparently irreconcilable, which can only be solved by the passing of time and the elimination of one or other of the combatants. In this event the final triumph must necessarily rest with those most closely associated with the machine process, since it is fast becoming dominant.

The socialism which is mere rebellion and an expression of discontent with economic failure is the product of non-association with the machine process. Its adherents are largely small business men who have failed to secure a permanent footing in the competitive struggle in retail trade, or who find themselves, after a successful business career, threatened with ruin and extinction by the operation of the great combinations. Besides these are the large numbers of craftsmen who still are tool-users and consequently still have a basis for a craft union. They are in much the same position as the small business man.

Both of these classes are without the machine-process state of mind. They are both prone to the same pietistic weaknesses; they

are both subject to emotional appeals; they both deal in absolutes; they both have a tendency to the same ridiculous and pettifogging little reforms, and they both are the slaves of some intangible thing which they call "Public Opinion," and bow down before some equally intangible thing which they call the "People." In fact, they carry over into the Socialist movement of today the ante-machine process of mind of yesterday. This very class still forms the nucleus of church membership throughout the country.

The difference between the city and country delegations to a Socialist convention is distinct, as distinct as the types of leaders which represent one or other. One instance will illustrate the effect of contact with the machine process. A carpenters' union in a country place in Southern California had volunteered its services free of cost towards the erection of a Methodist church in a small country place on Labor Day. The story of this, being told in Los Angeles to a meeting of the carpenters' union, was received with much merriment and jeering laughter. Here we have two entirely different points of view from members of unions in the same craft, and actually in the same county organization. The members of the one were craft union men, carrying on their business in the old-fashioned style in a rural district. The members of the other formed part of a building trades organization, which is an undeveloped and primary form of industrial organization, and mirrors to some extent the machine process in an industry of which carpentering is a sub-process. Hence, the machine-process state of mind naturally prevails in

the membership. It is very clear that persons holding such divergent views are bound to clash in the same organization, but these views are natural consequences of the industrial movement.

The expressions which have done duty for the combatants during the last few decades—"petit bourgeois" and "proletarian"—convey an approximation to the underlying differences, and they are by no means exact. Thus, the craft union man is a proletarian in the sense that he has only his labor power to sell. Still, except where he is involved in the machine process, his opinion is more likely to coincide with that of an actual small bourgeois than with that of a proletarian engaged in the machine process. It all seems to proceed from the process and to be independent of individual volition. Thus, a city carpenter engaged in the machine process, as has been pointed out, may go into the country and there drop out of the machine process. He will, in the course of time, adopt the point of view of the rural carpenter. He will remain interested in the Socialist movement and even join his country local, but his attitude to tactics will change. This will be all the more readily the case if, owing to the rural conditions, he is able to take small contracting, to procure a little property and thus to remove himself more and more from the operation of the machine process. He will still remain a member of the Socialist Party; will still take part in the Socialist movement, but his attitude of mind with regard to what is involved in the Socialist movement will differ much from his attitude when he comes, though only partially, in contact with the machine process.

A very complete instance of the effect of the machine process was shown in this very trade (carpentering) during the recent strike at Goldfield. The Western Federation of Miners, an industrial organization, which is formed, at least partially, to correspond with the machine-process development, was engaged in a strike against mine-owners. In the Western Federation were carpenters who were employed about mines, were members of the Federation, were engaged in the machine process, and, hence, were solidly organized with the striking miners. Besides these, however, were carpenters not engaged in the mining industry and who were affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. These carpenters were, in great part, sub-contractors and carried on their work not in connection with the machine process. They were antagonistic to the strike. In San Francisco, however, the carpenters who were members of the American Federation of Labor, but were engaged in the machine process, were for the strike. Here an obvious connection appears. It is quite possible—certain, in fact—that many of the Goldfield American Federation carpenters called themselves Socialists; it is also certain that many of the San Francisco carpenters also did the same. The machine process was, however, stronger than any artificial bonds, industrial or political.

Some years ago Richard Calwer published a pamphlet on the condition of the German Social Democratic Party, which raised the question of the relations of petit bourgeois and proletarian, and was much discussed. He spoke of the attitude of the petit bourgeois as reactionary, just as

some Socialists are fond of speaking of the attitude of certain groups in the American movement as reactionary. In reality this does not appear to be the case. What Calwer and many advanced Socialists are attacking at the present day is the old pre-machine process socialism, which has not changed, but which time and the machine process have rendered inadequate.

As I write this I read in the New York Call, May 29th, 1911: "Yet, as regards our movement, though every day it grows stronger in numbers, intelligence and power, there are many in our ranks who evidently believe that the Socialist movement is gradually losing its character as a revolutionary organization and becoming a party of compromise and reform." Against this the editor protests, though in the estimation of the writer he protests on altogether wrong grounds, and justifies his protest with an archaic quotation which has no connection whatsoever with the modern form of the Socialist movement, as it is affected by the machine process, this quotation being a vociferous demand for the wealth of the capitalist, in the old-fashioned **style, and is to the effect that the proletariat has strong hands and will take the bourgeois property.** Here is the old proprietary socialism again in an even more elementary form than usual.

SOME POTENTIALITIES OF THE MILITANT PROLETARIAT.

The machine-process conditions which have developed out of bourgeois society have produced a type differentiated, as we have seen, in many vital particulars from the dominant bour-

geois type. It may also be noted that the machine process fact has had its effect upon the individuals on each side of it; it has affected both proletarian and capitalist. Thus, if the modern proletarian does not view economic actualities with the same eyes as formerly, and if even the Socialist movement has ceased, in a great measure, to repose complete confidence in its own former solutions, the capitalist has by no means been immune from the workings of the same process. He, too, regards both economic facts and economic solutions differently than heretofore. What formerly he cursed now he blesses altogether. In accordance with his necessities, the schools and theologians have altered the tone of their teachings, so that competition which was formerly designated the life of trade, is now treated in a much less complimentary manner, and those combinations which were so recently denounced as pernicious and un-American have become, in turn, recognized as the fine flower of economic and social progress.

For example, Judge Elbert H. Gary, in the proceedings of the Steel Trust Investigating Committee, June, 1911, frankly advocated governmental control of the machine process. He actually asked for a federal license for the trusts, which would in itself be a protection against interference on the part of individual states. So that the ramifications of the greater industry spread ever more widely, and the mind of the capitalist, formerly concentrated upon a narrow and specific portion of productive industry, moves with the industry itself, growing more compre-

hensive as the necessities of the economic and industrial situation require.

But, with all these changes, the fundamental antagonism between the capitalist and the laborer does not become mitigated. On the contrary, it grows in intensity, as the machine process organizes the laborers ever more closely. For this organization at the machine and in terms of its process implies in addition organization for mutual assistance in the struggle for a larger proportion of the product. The more fully organized the business and the more complete the machine-process, the greater the mutual antagonism between the capitalist class and the laboring class. The chasm grows ever more unbridgeable, and the militant portion of the proletariat is compelled in the very nature of things to increase its militancy. Thus, funds which were formerly collected as insurance against sickness and to secure decent interment are now directed to actual industrial conflict and the money chests of the union tend more and more to become war chests.

This fact of the laboring class organization and its antagonism to the capitalistic management is the one fact which the capitalist organizer cannot avoid. It is the nemesis which follows him. All else may be met but "labor," which, after all, is only an abstraction for actual and flesh and blood men and women. Even governments may be ridiculed. Thus Judge Gary, while asking for the federal regulation of the steel trust and the fixing of the price of its products by the government, had no backwardness in stating that the steel manufacturers intended to hold an in-

ternational conference for the purpose of making the steel trust world wide in its operations and "to prevent destructive fluctuations of steel prices." But the employes cannot be dodged. To make the steel trust international and to fix an international price for steel products may be effective as against the U. S. Government, but it does not touch the labor question, a matter concerning which Judge Gary, though in other matters so sturdy, was actually pathetic.

In fact, such an extension of the scope of the steel trust and the creation of an international machine for the fixing of prices and the manufacture of that staple article not only consolidates the steel industry, it also consolidates and makes international the labor in that industry. The antagonism between employer and employee is not diminished thereby. On the contrary, it is precipitated, organized, and may be more readily accentuated. As the steel industry becomes more effective on the machine-process side, it equally becomes more effective on the labor side.

As an illustration, the revolutionary trade union attitude towards this manipulation of the steel trust affairs may be gathered from the following editorial from "Solidarity:"

The evidence that the steel trust has not properly reckoned with the revolutionary union movement is seen in the trust's wiping out craft union divisions from among its workers. Having thrown away its craft union shield against the workers, the trust would now take up the governmental shield against the middle class. This is the fatalism forced upon the ruling class by social evolution, and pointing unmistakably to the near at hand doom of that class. The trust, in the course of evolution, having brought about the condi-

tions for social ownership and control of industry, seeks to avert the inevitable, and only hastens it. Every move it makes—progressive though it may be in contrast with a lower stage of economic development—only shows more clearly its limitations of historical development; and points unerringly to the next phase of social evolution—industrial democracy—the rule of the people through industry. The middle class has already met its doom; the ultra capitalist class is about to meet its. The working class is organizing industrially the world over, to build the structure of the new society within the shell of the old. Judge Gary's double proposal, to fortify the trusts by national "governmental regulation," and at the same time to place them on an international footing, is but paying the way for the international supremacy of the working class. Let all revolutionary workers assist in this process by agitation and organization of their fellow workers. (Solidarity, June 10, 1911.)

So that the hostility of the employe to the employer does not seem to have become mitigated by such changes as the growth and triumph of the machine-process have effected in the mind of the opposing forces. On the contrary, the antagonism seems to have deepened and widened. The result was only to be expected from the elimination of personal relations and the reduction of the entire question to one of the ownership of the tool. The early bourgeois said that it was all a matter of contract, so that the laws and constitutions of today stand as the witness of the bourgeois necessities of yesterday. But contract implies at least consent and the ability to make contracts, both of which prerequisites are and have always been conspicuously absent in the relations of employer and employee. So that the pretense of individual contract has come to be ignored by degrees and the business agent makes

agreements for batches of men in accordance with a standardized scale of payment, while the employer purchases the labor power in batches quite irrespective of the individual qualities of the separate living receptacles of labor-power which go to make up the sum total of the mass of labor-power required. Both sides much prefer this method. The large employer approves of collective bargaining because it is all in the direction of standardization and the business agent prefers it because it gives him greater control over the men of the union and at the same time allows him to gain a certain amount of fame, if nothing else, by the successful arrangement of contracts and working agreements. Now and again there is a cry in favor of the "open shop," which means the abolition of collective bargaining, but such a demand rises for the most part from the small business which is not yet involved in the machine-process. Sometimes, however, it proceeds from the greater concerns, but is then used merely as an incident in bargaining in order to impress the business agent with the necessity of lowering his scale of demands. So far has collective bargaining gone that the Civic Federation was formed in this country, largely for the purpose of promoting it, and of bringing about arrangements between the greater capitalists and the union labor officials which would obviate much of the trouble between employer and employee.

But this device, promising as it appeared, does not seem to proceed satisfactorily. Hostility on the part of the rank and file of the organized workers pursues every effort at reconciliation

with the employers because, in the very essence of things, anything but hostility between the owners of the tools of production and the workers is in the nature of things impossible. Thus, the United Mine Workers have recently demanded the resignation of John Mitchell from the Civic Federation, or his expulsion from the union. The latter, having the choice thus uncompromisingly set before him, abandoned the Civic Federation. It will be noted that the United Mine Workers is one of the largest and most important labor organizations in the country and that John Mitchell is very distinguished as a labor leader who has succeeded in keeping the enthusiastic support of the miners, and, at the same time, gaining for a labor representative in this country much admiration and quite an unusual amount of attention.

In spite of collective bargaining and conferences between labor leaders and capitalists, the hostility between the parties on each side of the machine process really increases in intensity until it approaches actual conflict. Indeed, only now are the forces of the opponents beginning to come into the field. All former fighting has been skirmishing, the conflict of isolated groups who have carried on their struggles apart from the main bodies and whose operations have but slightly interfered with the general process of production and distribution.

In the aggregate, it may be conceded that the amount of economic loss due to strikes and the interruption of work by industrial disputes has been very great. It may also be granted that large numbers of employers have been bank-

rupted and that the economic position of thousands of employees has been destroyed by the same means. But such conflicts do not have the effect of eliminating the combatants. The proletarian who is reduced to a lower position by virtue of the fact that his strike has failed, who is driven out, with the probable loss of his trade, and who becomes thereby an unskilled workman, is not removed as a combatant; he may still find his place in the general fight which is being waged round the machine. He may be crushed and lose effectiveness as an actual fighter, for men who have been badly beaten, whether as capitalist or workman, seldom have the requisite stamina remaining to constitute them good fighters thereafter. His children may be reduced in position also, but those children, even the girls, to an ever increasing extent, are obliged to earn their living in service to the machine process, that indomitable modern fact on each side of which are ranged those unslumbering and restless hates and antagonisms upon which in reality depend the progress of the modern world. That beaten proletarian is still to reckon with, even in the person of his children, so that the conflict cannot be terminated by the defeat of the proletarian, at least in any species of industrial conflict with which history has made us familiar.

And what is true of the proletarian is true also of the capitalist. To defeat and even to ruin the small capitalist by industrial conflict is not to weaken, it is actually to strengthen the capitalist body, by removing a useless factor and by, therefore, tending to concentrate the cap-

italist strength. To ruin the individual capitalist is the aim of capitalism itself. To that end all plans and combinations are devised, all sorts of fraudulent schemes are made, all manner of sudden attacks and intricate plans of campaign are calculated and developed. The real process of capitalism is toward the destruction of the individual capitalist that thereby capitalism may be organized.

The Steel Trust, in the instance above quoted, is the victor in an exterminating war carried over a long period of time between coteries of competing manufacturers. It comes laden with the accumulated spoils of ruined steel manufacturers. It has reached its goal; it is fully organized. Thereupon, having attained its climax, it ceases further from ruining individual manufacturers. It calls upon the government itself to fix a price for steel; it having, in the first place, secured to itself by virtue of the economic power it has achieved, possession of the government. Even then it hesitates to trust the government of its own creation, but, making an international agreement, brings this international economic fact to bear upon its national government.

This international economic fact has a greater significance than the mere power which it is capable of exercising over a national government. It must mirror itself to the extent of its potentiality in politics; and an international economic fact will be mirrored on no less than an international scale. Does this, then, point to an international state for some purposes, at least, a governmental force transcending national

lines? No less. And, as the economic accomplished fact must not be endangered by the friction of factors and ingredients subordinate to that fact, it also implies an international police. It should not be overlooked that the most strenuous champion of international peace is Andrew Carnegie, one of the most efficient instruments in the creation of the steel trust. International peace implies, in its turn, an international police, responsible to an international controlling power, which, having possession of the police power, is, consequently, a government. The conclusion is unavoidable. The dreams of internationalism, which have been regarded as the most absurdly ridiculous and ultra-poetic, become the most prosaic, and that most unwelcome, because unpatriotic, result is being realized through this economic fact and its ramifications, and through that alone.

But, the internationalism impending does not immediately bring that peace which has been so loudly proclaimed—it brings peace between capitalists, because itself is the result of their interests becoming so unified and concentrated that war grows impossible, even unthinkable. It brings peace between the proletariats of the various countries, because the concentration of industry also tends to concentrate their interests and to unify their purposes. It eliminates national jealousies and antagonisms, tends to reduce to a minimum the inconveniences caused by diversities of language, dissipates religious disputes by the elimination of religion itself, which, at least, in its present form, cannot exist concurrently with the machine process, and sub-

stitutes for all the convolutions and intricacies of international politics, with its jealousies and intrigues, involving the proletarian class as a subject class, the regularity and the smoothness of the machine process.

As the capitalist functions on the international field and in accordance with the development of the machine process, the proletarian likewise so functions in accordance with the same facts. It is curious to note also that his international action depends upon and is commensurate with the development of the machine process and with that alone. The development of what might be called the international idea in the proletarian movement is in itself an interesting study in the effect of the machine process as contrasted with a theoretical propaganda.

It was obvious very early that proletarians being subjected everywhere to the tyranny of capitalism had much in common, and that it was, therefore, the greatest folly for members of the working class to kill one another in international wars, which in no way subserved their interests. Hence, one of the very first acts of the early Socialists, or rather "Communists," as the Marxians at that time called themselves, was to form an international group which they called the International Workingman's Association. This group made much noise, and caused considerable perturbation among the more nervous bourgeois and those in whom the glaring reports of the capitalist press produced emotional reactions. It was called the Red International. It numbered in its ranks many men of international reputation and had more than its share

of talent and enthusiasm. It accomplished nothing, however, of any note. Towards the last it became a veritable cave of the winds, where noisy and, frequently, empty disputes on academic subjects frittered away the time and energy of the members. Finally, the personal antagonisms grew so intense as to be unbearable and the Red International perished in the smoke of its own controversies.

The sudden recrudescence of the Socialist movement in the political form in the early eighties again caused a movement towards the realization of the international idea. Accordingly, the international Socialist political congresses were constituted. Painfully and with a palpable effort towards respectability, these have been gradually brought to assume a form more and more resembling the parliamentary, until now the leading parliamentary figures assume as nearly a cabinet ministerial air as possible and the congresses grow more and more like a belated and uninteresting replica of an ordinary parliament. Such congresses cannot inspire either respect or faith. They are too obviously exotic; the whole business seems calculated to make good little bourgeois out of naughty little proletarians; it is palpably artificial and insincere. The problems presented tend to grow less and less vital with each passing congress, so that the apologists are forced to find solace in the fact that nothing essential comes up for discussion, upon the ground that nothing fundamental remains to be discussed, all fundamentals having been very satisfactorily settled. Both these forms of the "international" are really

testimonials to the folly of trying to make things. Socialism is international in its essence; therefore, argue the Socialists, "let us make an international," and they proceed to make it. It is the same old utopianism which has been so much mocked and yet so steadily pursued, the same fatuous reasoning which, beginning with the postulate that socialism implies co-operation, ends almost simultaneously with the hurried resolve to create forthwith a co-operative commonwealth.

The machine process solves, naturally, those problems which seem insurmountable and are really so to those who essay to solve them, either in terms of *a priorism* or by sudden leaps into idealistic utopianism. We have seen only in the present month (June, 1911) how the sailors of some five nations have naturally and indeed almost instinctively pooled their interests, and to what slight extent frontiers avail to keep separate those whom the machine process has declared shall be united. The Socialists have been called, repeatedly, good prophets, but poor performers. Let them take heart of grace; they will not be called upon to perform. The machine process will do all the performing for them.

It may be seen, therefore, that there is no escape from the conflict between the possessor and the user of the machine. Fate seems to be inexorable on that score. Given the machine, the antagonistic forces muster on each side of it, like Greeks and Trojans contesting for the body of a hero, for the impelling purpose of the antagonism is the ownership of the machine. That conflict cannot be escaped. Partnership between

employer and employee is impossible, profit-sharing on any scale worthy of the name is unthinkable, and the instances where it is supposedly practiced are, in reality, ludicrous in the smallness of their scope and the magnitude of their pretensions. State socialism or state capitalism, two words for the same thing, does not in the slightest degree mitigate the fact of the hostility of the classes; on the other hand, it merely tends to set the employees of the state industry in revolutionary antagonism to the government, as we have seen in the case of the French railways and in many other modern instances of a similar nature. Furthermore, as we have seen, the extension of the machine process into the international realm effects nothing in the direction of industrial peace, but merely converts the whole world, in so far as the machine process spreads, into a great industrial battle-ground, so that the industrial conflict loses all traces of local character and becomes itself international, resolving itself ultimately into a struggle for the possession or the repression of the international police. This is the result of state socialism. Whatever form it may assume, it converts a potentially revolutionary proletariat into an actual revolutionary force.

For the present the militant proletarian cares little about government or politics. In spite of his instructors, he is shy, and all the lures of the politicians have so far failed to move him. But, he does care about his hours and wages and he does regard with hostility the owner of the machine with which he is compelled to work and of the proceeds of his proportion of his

group work with which he receives only a fraction.

To deliver the machine into the hands of what is called the state, is no solution of the evil. The capitalists having the economic and, consequently, the political power, will permit only of government ownership or control when it is to their advantage. We have seen many instances of that in recent years. They will, as in South Africa, not only allow, but actually cause the government to take up, own and manage industries which are subsidiary and useful to the dominant industry, control of which the capitalist keeps. Or, they may, again, when it suits their purpose, cause a sale of their industry to the community, taking bonds therefor and becoming investors instead of entrepreneurs. To the proletarian an employer is still an employer, whether he wear the guise of the state, or keep the top hat and frock coat of the Victorian benefactor of humanity. But, to rise in industrial revolt against the state is to engage in a revolutionary campaign, with all the risks belonging to such a campaign. It might and probably would be visited with extraordinary penalties. It is already judged in advance. Governmental postal employes are denied the privilege of the formation of unions upon the ground that they are governmental employes, that their abstention from employment by strike and the like would dislocate the whole community and that they are not entitled to cause such discomfort to other people. The governmental ownership of railroads brings similar problems in its train and there is little doubt that the action of the gov-

ernment would take the same course. This gives rise to a whole series of complicated problems, such as face the French government with regard to the reinstatement of the railroad men who were discharged for striking; it inflames the popular mind against the government, and causes the hatred of the working class to be directed from the individual employer to the governmental employer. It thus concentrates the proletarian wrath upon one object which is correspondingly the more easily overcome. The result is, however, achieved not by a vote implying a change of ministry in the approved liberal fashion, but by the industrial victory of the proletariat, thus giving it the economic power which thereafter receives political recognition. This is a reversal of the generally accepted social democratic doctrine, which first predicates political victory, and then a new organization of industry in terms of the political victory, an idea which has provoked the contemptuous criticism of practical capitalistic entrepreneurs who, whatever may be their defects, are at least informed as to the methods of conducting an industry.

That economic progress, whether it take the form of increasing combinations, with the necessary and unavoidable governmental control, or the frank ownership of the machine by the state or municipality, does not imply any diminution of proletarian militancy, is quite obvious. There does not, moreover, appear to be any means of overcoming this militancy; on the contrary, it would seem destined to grow to its culmination.

The question thereupon arises whether such a proletarian movement could be reasonably ex-

pected to meet with success. We know, historically, that servile movements, as they have hitherto appeared, have not been successful; but, on the contrary, that tragic failure has marked the efforts of the working class to deliver itself from the oppression of those who have exploited it. As we have seen, however, the present conditions are markedly different in important respects from those which have gone before, and have produced a type differing from its predecessors not only in kind, but in opportunity.

The proletarian cannot be eliminated. No method has yet been found which will allow of the operation of machinery and the production of goods without the employment of human energy. Moreover, no way has been discovered to prevent the organization of workers around the instrument of production. On the contrary, given the machine, organization around that machine becomes imperative; it is practically automatic and cannot be avoided. There is no way either of teaching or of compelling the proletarian not to organize.

Again, the proletarian, albeit part of the machinery, from the capitalist point of view and, notwithstanding the use of the terms "hands" and "labor" as abstract expressions, to connote his position from the capitalist standpoint, is no abstraction. He is a human being possessing brain, even as an employer, and amenable to the cultural effects of the economic fact, as we have seen, so that the almost instinctive organization round the machine becomes developed in the course of the progress of the machine industry into conscious organization. Thus arises

what may be termed an organizational intelligence which is as well able to grasp the mechanism and the extent of the machine process as are the capitalists themselves.

This development grows ever more rapidly, so that the proleteriat of today, at least in the persons of its most active members, who may be called the thinking apparatus of his organization, is gaining a breadth of view commensurate with the scope of the machine process itself. Anyone who has watched the growth of the labor movement for a long period of years cannot fail to be struck by the superior mental grasp of the new industrial unionist as compared with that of the old craft unionist. The tone even of the craft journals, for the most part edited by those who have not outgrown the obsolete point of view, is dull and comparatively uninteresting. It seems to echo the voice of the workman in a period anterior to the machine process and is obviously the note of a less progressive and worse informed type. Naturally, however, the ordinary man in the ranks of the unionists does not possess any conspicuous superiority to the ordinary dividend drawer. They are each most closely interested in the same thing, how much each can get, the one in the shape of dividends, the other in working as little time for as much money as possible. And just as the officers and industrial managers of the dividend consumers are driven by the demands of their clients to the exploitation of industry, so the representatives of the wage workers are on their part compelled incessantly to seek for their clients shorter hours and higher pay, in

fact, as far as possible, an ever-increasing share of the product of the machine. Thus, the impossibility of proletarian elimination implies of necessity the continuance of the proletarian struggle.

Not only is this the case, but the victory must, in the long run, rest with the proletarian. For the laborers, being men, continually demand more and possess the human insatiability in the pursuit of happiness, which means, as far as history can be relied upon, the pursuit of material ends. There is, on the other hand, a limitation to the possibilities of capitalistic accumulation, however distant. Capitalism reaches its climax, the point beyond which it ceases to make gains, then begin to recede and, finally, succumbs to the attacks of the younger and more vigorous element, which has been produced by itself, and which is destined to destroy it. If this offspring of capitalism cannot avail to destroy and reconstruct, the system still perishes, as has happened in anterior systems. It will be remembered, however, that in none of the preceding systems has a type been produced in any way comparable with the modern machine process proletarian type, either in revolutionary mental constitution, generated and fostered by the system itself, or in revolutionary possibilities proceeding from and dependent upon the system.

The whole capitalist process itself is based upon the organized discipline and co-ordination of the labor-force applied to the machine. The very development of the machine process by its intricacies and convolutions makes that proletarian discipline ever more necessary. To break

the discipline is to break the operation of the machine process, and that is to disturb the whole mechanism upon which the capitalist depends for his returns. This fact working upon the mind of the proletarian has produced the modern phenomenon of industrial unionism and the general strike, both of which are designed for the express purpose of interfering with the machine process in the interest of the associated laborers.

Again, the very complications of the modern machine render it more easily the prey of an attacking force. A simple tool broken is easily repaired; a single machine put out of gear may likewise be soon made effective again without seriously disturbing the routine of the shop. It is quite otherwise, however, with the exceedingly complex modern machinery which depends upon the harmonious working of hundreds or thousands of interdependent parts the dislocation of any one of which interrupts, of necessity, the working of the machine. To give an instance: it was discovered in Austria that the entire passenger service of a railway might be seriously disturbed by an organized strict following of the rules by the ticket clerks. They were told to strictly scrutinize all tickets issued. By preconcerted arrangement to read every ticket issued, they practically put the entire train service out of gear. This vulnerability of the machine process to united proletarian action has given rise in its turn to the very recent phenomenon of "Sabotage," a form of labor war, of which we shall, no doubt, hear much more in the near future.

For many reasons, therefore, the potentialities for successful revolt of the modern proletariat are incomparably greater than those of a subject class in any prior period of history. When it is borne in mind also that the economic facts find their reflex in political action, and that the modern state may easily, as we have seen, find itself subject to proletarian revolutionary activity, he would be very bold who would prophesy the same fate for the proletarian as has befallen his revolutionary predecessors.

III

WHAT IS A UNION?

The argument of the average trade unionist in support of his organization runs something like this: "My craft is my capital; if the capitalist has the right to protect his money capital, I have the right to protect my capital; that is, my craft. My craft is just as much my property as the capitalist's machinery is his property and should be protected equally with the machinery of the capitalist." Addressed to the ordinary man in the street, and couched in the language which church, school and forum have made comprehensible by the multitude, it is quite a telling apology for the right of combination, the purposes of trade defense, and has, no doubt, in its time performed marvels in winning converts to the side of trade unionism.

It is so flattering. It informs the working class that its members have capital, a statement false on the face of it; again, it misleads the working class by the false premise that its members have rights. The fallacy underlying both false statements is that a member of the working class is an actual member of modern society with an interest in the state, and fully equipped with all the panoply of modern citizenship, and a stake in the community.

The futility of such an argument will dawn later upon the mind of the convert to trade unionism. He will find that a craft is a form of "capital" which cannot readily be invested. Also, that he cannot place that form of "capital" in the safe deposit box and wait until there is a demand for it. The painful discovery will be made also, that if his craft is not being exercised, neither is he, the proprietor of the craft, and that long abstention from activity threatens not only the trade but the proprietor of it with extinction. But the trade is the means of life, it is the instrument by which the worker secures himself in the hurly-burly which we call organized society. The insurance of one's trade is an insurance of the means of life. In a very real sense the trade or craft becomes a property. All, therefore, who have the same trade or craft are interested in the preservation of that property. The raising of the position of the trade implies material benefit to the owners of the trade, just as the increase in price of any commodity tends to the benefit of those who do possess that commodity and not to the benefit of those who do not possess that property.

We find this to be the prevailing view of the craft among all unionists. The justification of the union lies in the preservation of the craft. It is the moving cause for the institution of unions and the determining factor in all union disputes. The maintenance of the property which the craft represents is the essential reason of the formation of the union in the first place and it is the object kept in view by business agents and by trade union officials in all con-

troversies with employers, who naturally wish to depress as far as possible the price of the commodity which they purchase.

Shylock's defense, "You do take my life when you do take the means whereby I live," is the stock argument of the unionist. The means of the Jew was his supply of ready cash which he put out to interest in the market, the returns on which constituted his livelihood. The trade which the craftsman follows is his property on which he must get his returns. If the trade is taken away the means of life in terms of that trade are gone. The worker is deprived of his property; the quality of his labor which enabled him to make a union disappears, he has no special commodity to offer for sale, such labor power as he has for sale is ordinary labor power possessing no distinguishing marks which allow of the placing upon it of a special price; he becomes an unskilled laborer, an ordinary human being in place of the owner of a specific property capable of being raised in price by organization and limitation of the market.

Herein lies a very important distinction. As a skilled laborer possessing the commodity of skilled labor and able to preserve or to enhance the price of that commodity by contraction and limitation of the market, he may be able to improve the position of the possessors of that commodity, but that is the limit of his powers, even of his desires. As an owner, he naturally cares only to increase the value of his own wares; with that instinct of self-preservation which leads one to consider only himself in times of strife, his attention is riveted upon his own

craft and the maintenance of that craft. As a result, we may see an actual improvement in the position of members of a given craft without any improvement in the position of labor as a whole. In fact, that is precisely what we do see. Trades unions may increase in power and influence, may have full treasuries, may keep up the price of labor in their own sphere, and outside that sphere the mass of laborers may still remain in the same unfortunate position and the general standard be no whit raised.

The first unions were mutual benefit societies and were intended to perform for their members much the same services as the friendly societies do today. They had the same inconsequential and ridiculous ritual and passwords, the mystic grips, and emblems and mysteries of signs and countersigns. They were intended to insure the members in times of sickness and to provide decent burial, functions which are still exercised by many of the trade societies.

But the association of members of the same trade, naturally, inevitably, indeed, led to the consideration of the economics of the craft itself, and to action for the benefit of the craft.

At this stage the insurance features of trade unionism tended to recede and aggressiveness on behalf of the craft became more and more conspicuous. The difference between the militant unions who were constantly pressing their demands at the point of production in the shop and the old conservative mutual protective associations became more and more obvious. The latter were regarded with approval by the employers and received the benediction of society.

The former were anathema and courts and legislatures leagued together to prevent their development.

But the unions developed because the form of society in which they found themselves was peculiarly adapted to their development. They came into being in terms of the individualistic conceptions of an individualistic age and based their demands philosophically upon the same ground as the basic law of the land regarding property rights. They claimed their craft as a property; indeed, they claimed it as capital; they insisted upon their rights to receive as much for their commodity as they were able to obtain by dickering in the market; they made their slogan "a fair day's work for a fair day's wage," frankly conceded the fact of a labor market and offered their commodity for sale in that market. But they took no higher ground than that.

Even in an age when "rights" was the catchword of the time, when the echoes of the old bourgeois revolution were still heard in all departments of public life and legislature and law courts were noisy with the babble of "rights" the unions took no higher ground than the "rights of property." They did not even take the absurd but high sounding "human rights" of the humanitarians, they claimed nothing for themselves as Man, the only claim was in prosecution of their demands for their property rights. The fact that they could do nothing else is not pertinent here, neither is the further fact that by virtue of these essential primary claims they raised the position of labor from one of status, as servant, to one of contract, as between pos-

sessors of property. That they were compelled to do this latter is evident, for, in spite of the declarations of freedom of contract of the bourgeois revolution, the relation of employer and employee was regarded as one of master and servant and the first attempts to regulate wages on the side of the servant were considered as subversive of all civil rule and particularly blasphemous and disturbing to all religion and the proper order of things.

It must be insisted that the trade union movement originated not as a movement of working men, as working men, for the preservation of the working class as such and for the development of the proletarian, but as an association of the possessors of certain specific property for the benefit of that property and the owners of that property.

In fact, the trade unionists took little heed of the human as contrasted with the property owner in their struggles. Even their own lives they have considered as inferior to their property rights. This is obvious from a history of the organization of those who spend their lives in dangerous occupations and whose life and limb are risked in the pursuit of their daily bread. We have had many strikes against lowering of wages, many strikes for an increase of wages, for the right to organize, for the right to boycott, for every movement which tends to increase the value of the specific craft property and to make the control of that property more easy and more effective. But, how many strikes, on the other hand, have been launched against conditions of labor which imperil the life and limb of

the laborer? Futile appeals to the legislatures with all the risk of adverse decisions in the Courts, risks which have nearly always become realities, have been the methods chosen by the unionists to meet the intolerable conditions imposed by employers upon laborers. Compare the maundering ineffectiveness in matters of life and limb with the militancy, the self-denial, the endurance and the actual heroism shown by trade unionists in defense of their property, when they have been battling on behalf of wages and hours, and the specific returns upon their invested "capital," to wit, their craft.

There can be little question that the property question has dominated the entire trade union mind.

The unionist has looked at the problem, not as a human, but as a property problem, and so has been a true son of the capitalistic and individualistic age. He has never risen above or beyond the conceptions of the times; he has been a trader, merely, with a trader's mind, not the mind even of a larger trader. No light has beaten upon his brain because his mind has been concentrated upon the immediate returns for the investment of that craft which he so pompously has called his "capital." The cultural effects of his organizations have been negligible; he has shown little tendency to pursue other than the most banal material ends. With all his great organizations the real upsurge of mankind, the force and the dignity of the human movement, have not, except on rare and striking occasions, manifested themselves through him. It is the misfortune of the trade unionist that he has had

to operate in terms of his property and to display all the disturbing symptoms of the small trader, who also agonizes in defense of his property.

VANISHING PROPERTY

Security of property is impossible, for property destroys itself. The whole bourgeois revolution is made in terms of property; the very basis of the Republic, as of all modern states, consists in the recognition of the rights of property. In fact in its last analysis the vaunted rights of man may be ultimately resolved into rights of property. The inviolability of property is the fundamental basis, and as the New York Court of Appeals recently said, "The right of property rests not upon philosophical or scientific speculations, nor yet upon the dictates of natural justice." The rights of property transcend the rights of man; indeed, "Rights of property" is the proper translation of "rights of man."

The development of rights of man into rights of property has reached such a point that rights of property alone survive, and as the Court above gravely states at another place in the same opinion without any apparent idea of the significance of its own stupid gravity, "Under our form of government Courts must regard all economic, philosophical and moral theories, however attractive and desirable they may be, as subordinate to the primary question whether they can be moulded into statutes without infringing upon the letter or spirit of our written constitutions." The admission is almost naive in its innocent simplicity. Say the wise ones, in effect, our con-

stitutions rest primarily upon rights of property, we know nothing and care less about rights of man, we stand by the written constitutions which are unmistakably the exponents of rights of property, and if you desire to interfere with those, you cannot do so except by upsetting the constitution and the organic law of the present system." It is quite true, all of it; the bourgeois intends to go out, as he came in, fighting for rights of property.

We know very well, however, that the economic system of which the rights of property is the expression is a confiscatory system. By virtue of economic development itself rights of property are rendered nugatory and the whole matter resolves itself with a question of rights of stronger and bigger property. Against this tendency all legal and constitutional guarantees are no bulwark. On the other hand, the constitutional declarations are made the very instruments by which small property is confiscated. It is no benefit to say that the constitution guarantees rights of property, for the constitution, as a matter of fact, merely guarantees the right of the economically strong to dispossess the economically feeble, or rather establishes the title of the strong after he has already demolished the weak.

There is nothing more evident than the growth of great property at the expense of little property, for the cry of the small dispossessed is the most notable social phenomenon of our time.

The small property has practically gone; all legal and constitutional provisions for its maintenance notwithstanding. The economic result accomplished receives the benediction of the

Courts, and the emblazoned standard of "Rights of property" waves triumphantly over a field strewn with the corpses of former property owners.

The craftsman, therefore, who considers his craft as property must not be surprised to learn that his craft property follows the same course as all other property and becomes subordinated to the greater force and, indeed, destroyed by it.

The father apprentices his son to a trade, telling him that in the possession of a trade he has more than money. "You may lose your money; but never your trade," says the father, deceiving himself and his son thereby. Trades vanish suddenly before new inventions and the consolidation of industry, just as the property of the small middle class disappears in face of the same manifestations of industrial progress. But just as the possessor of small property congratulates himself upon that which marks him off from the propertyless generality, so does the possessor of a craft flatter himself that he is superior to the "unskilled man." He belongs to another class, he occupies a more exalted plane; he is an "aristocrat of labor," so that he forms his unions, locks and double-locks the door to the union; limits apprenticeship; takes every precaution against an invasion of his craft and then sits down in comparative security of possession, trusting in his superior position to save himself and his family in the midst of the vicissitudes of the capitalistic system.

Suddenly, however, a new development of technique, the discovery of a new process, a new combination of industrial forces and the craft

which was to provide our craftsman with the means of existence in perpetuity becomes obsolete, an anachronism, and with it the craftsman. Thereupon also the union which he made to protect him in the possession of that craft property also collapses, for if the craft disappears, it is clear that the union must disappear with it. The craftsman is bereft of all that constitutes property, and of the organization upon which he relied as a defender of that which can no longer be defended, because it no longer exists. He is stripped of everything that differentiated him from the mass of workers. He has no longer the force of organization, aggressive and protective, aggressive as a weapon with which he might extort terms from the opposing force at the point of production, protective in that by its means he was able to limit the market and to artificially increase the price of his wares. With the loss of his craft, too, go all the material advantages which he possessed over the despised members of the working class who had no craft and who, therefore, had no basis for an exclusive organization. He is stripped of his property as effectively as any landed proprietor of France by decree. He is bankrupt of his title of "aristocrat" and falls perforce into the ranks of undifferentiated and uncategorized laboring humanity.

There is, then, no more permanence in craft property than in any other form of property under the present economic conditions with their continual growth and change, and the craft form of organization becomes feeble and ineffective with the passing of time.

This ineffectiveness results not merely from the fact that the craft unionism form of organization is unsatisfactory and incompetent to meet the aggressions of the employers, but from the fundamental and essential fact that the economic basis of the craft union has been shaken and the structure built on a supposedly solid foundation has collapsed with the foundation upon which it rested.

It cannot be too strongly insisted that the weakness of the trade union movement is not merely a weakness of organization. It proceeds from the essential weakness of the economic basis of the craft. The position of the craft unionist is in this respect identical with that of the small bourgeois, who pivots his political philosophy also in terms of an ineffectual and transitory property.

There is therefore a curiously complete similarity in their political viewpoint, as well as in their method of approach in the consideration of social problems. It is no more than the reflex of the old individualism which persists. The attack of the greater capitalism, whether directed against the small trader or the craft unionist, is met by appeals to ethical sentiment, by stubborn resistance, usually with obsolete weapons, and frequently by stupid and absolutely valueless re-creations. All of which manifestations proceed from the insecurity of the economic portion of each of these elements, small business and the craft union.

It is true that the persistence of certain classes of hand labor and even their more complete development may afford a basis for the persistence

of craft organization among a limited and comparatively insignificant portion of the working class. For example, in the molding trade, when the increased use of machinery also necessitated a certain increase in the numbers of hand laborers incident to the growth of trade, there was even necessitated an extraordinary degree of skill in that particular work due to the extension of molders' products to fields which were formerly occupied by forgings or other process work. It is true, also, in all probability, that the above consequences sprang from a scientific development in which the machines were not the predominant factor. But to lay any stress upon such a circumstance as showing the persistence of craft labor is misleading in the extreme and not in accordance with the facts.

The whole tendency of modern industry has been away from the skill of the individual and in the direction of merging individual skill in a group product. Not only so, but the tendency has been markedly towards the elimination of personal individual skill in itself. Standardization, which is a practical necessity in view of the modern markets, means nothing short of the annihilation of individual skill except in the initial concept and its materialization in the original model.

Skill, regarded as property, rests on a very slender basis. Its supply is looked for less and less in the masses of the working people.

On the other hand, the teaching of mechanical arts in schools specially devoted to that purpose, and the education of an increasing number in the universities in the theory and application of me-

chanics, mark a tendency for skill and initiative to leave the ranks of the proletariat and to become the property of those who may be denominated the officers of the industrial army. So far has this gone that the saving of industrial effort and the conservation of industrial energy is becoming almost a profession in itself.

We have recently read of various devices resulting from experiments in the saving of waste labor in industrial effort. These are the results of observation and experiment among those not actually engaged in the process of industrial production; but their results upon those so engaged are well worth at least a passing notice. They tend to still further eliminate any advantage which particular skill or even marked agility may possess. When the movements are numbered and when it is made an essential of the opportunity to labor that the force employed upon a specific task should carry out a specified number of actual physical movements according to a schedule, that, in fact, work should resolve itself into a methodical drill under the eye of an overseer, all individuality is of course obliterated. And with the individuality goes the property. The possession of particular skill becomes more of a nuisance in the ordinary process than an advantage and any tendency to individuality would be as embarrassing to the conduct of a well managed workshop as would be the display of such unwelcome qualities in a private soldier.

So by the very tendency of economic development the pitiful little property of the craft union man is swept away.

The tendency of the machine and the progressive organization of labor to annihilate the property of the trade unionist is of necessity recognized by those members of the unions who pay any heed to the effects of the present system upon this organization.

The remedy suggested is that the machine may be controlled by the union, and that the craft may be preserved round the machine. In short, the purpose is to organize the men engaged in work on the machine in terms of the craft and to endeavor to preserve the vestiges of craft property by means of the machine. But property to be of value must be acquired, at least, at first. That which all can possess is by no means property. In fact the very essence of property lies in its exclusiveness, and it is obvious that the machine industry does not render the maintenance of any such property at all probable nor even possible.

Machine industry in its essence consists of the repetition of monotonous movements in terms of the machine. The motions of the machine are controlling and the individual is made subordinate to the machine movement. It is very clear that such motions are easily learned in comparison with those of individual handicraft and that property in a trade of this description rests upon a very slight and unstable basis.

The result is shown in the almost practical abolition of the apprentice system which formed a fairly complete defense against the invasion of a trade by the unskilled labor element on the outside.

A machine-craft implies a self-wrecking contradiction. This fact is very clearly apparent in

strikes when the machine is placed in the hands of the unskilled men who constitute the effective scab force upon which the employer relies at such times. There is no use to endeavor to disguise the fact that given a few weeks' instruction the scabs are well able to take care of the machines and that if at the conclusion of the strike they are allowed to work side by side with the union men they become eligible members of the union and are received as such. This has happened too often to be denied.

If the craft is to be regarded as property which differentiates its possessors from the general mass of the working class how slight is that property! It is as though it were not. In fact, it would be better for the members of the craft who rely upon it, if it did not exist, for then it would cease to constitute a barrier as now between them and the rest of their fellows.

The property of the craftsman in his craft is therefore, a vanishing property. Reliance upon it is out of the question; and pride in it as affording a means of differentiating its possessors from the mass of their fellows is little better than an absurdity. It is, however, upon this property notion that the whole fabric of craft unionism depends.

REVOLUTIONARY UNIONISM

When the working class abandons the property notion; in other words, when economic conditions have so far reflected themselves in the minds of the workers that they recognize the property notion as no longer tenable, a complete change of attitude towards society occurs.

Property disappearing, Man leaps to the front again and the craftsman faces the problem in terms of Man. He does not arrive at such a place in his mental development nevertheless until conditions have actually put him there. Once there, however, he finds his only way to security through an attack upon the structure of society which has deprived him of his property or of any chance to secure property. He can only make this attack by assaulting the enemy where he meets him, namely, at the point of production in the shop, for it is there that the contact is and that the issue must be fought out.

The fight in the shop for the product is the determinative fight of the future. Where the workman wins in the shop, improves his economic position, develops his fighting capacity and builds up his organization every step taken by him is a step towards ultimate victory. He treads the upward path. There is no need to speak of the political phase of the matter here, as that receives consideration in the next chapter, but it must not be overlooked that economic victory is the essential; without it the political reflex is no reflex of a class necessarily victorious, but may simply be the ineffective protest of an economically incapable and losing class. To call in politics to redress the economic balance is a useless attempt at a physical impossibility. The first essential is victory in the shop, and such victory as we have seen cannot be made in terms of craft unionism with its inseparable small property notion.

The fight in the shop raises the fundamental question of the so-called contract of employment,

upon which depends the whole mass of legal and legislative decisions and enactments proclaiming the various phases of that contract and interpreting it from the viewpoint of the employing class. The elimination of the property notion destroys also the notion of contract, for without property neither party has anything about which to contract.

The idea of contract disappearing, there remain without any further illusion or concealment two contending classes, each of them striving for possession of the product. Let this once appear to the mind of the worker and his point of view changes immediately. No longer does he regard himself as an individual bargaining with another individual bound by certain legal concepts and swaddled in preconceived limitations as to what constitutes his position relative to the other individual. He sees himself on the contrary as a member of a group, which group is engaged in a struggle for the possession of certain products, which are the materialization of the life-energy of himself and the other members of the group. The machinery and equipment on which he has been accustomed to look as the property of the other contracting party becomes in his eyes the materialization of the life-energy of other groups of workers like himself, which has found its way into the hands of the enemy, the individual or the group with whom he is battling for the possession of the product. The fight then assumes the aspect of a struggle not only for the possession of the product, but in addition for the possession of the tools in the hands of the enemy, which tools are, as we have said above, in their turn the product of a working group.

This point of view cannot be taught philosophically. No amount of instruction will avail to raise a question so apparently abstract and implying a knowledge of the working of historical forces as well as a grasp of the economic situation into a practical question deliberately conceived and pursued to victory. Only practical experience can achieve this result. The mental structure of the proletarian is shaped in accordance with the actual environment in which he is, the unassailable and implacable facts of which penetrate his brain and shape his impulses.

The property notion is not easily abandoned for it implies a promise of personal growth and of developing importance which cannot be readily overlooked, but which are on the other hand exceedingly fascinating. To rise above one's station in life, to obtain that which appears to be wealth in comparison with one's evident existent poverty, to become independent of "the chances and changes of this mortal life" at least as far as that important economic side is concerned, has been the ambition of every ambitious lad who has entered a trade. It is an ambition also which has received the blessed sanction of social approval and which points a way to dizzy heights of accomplishment. Is not history full of the stories of the young artisans who have gone forth with their craft as their sword like modern knights errant and have carved a path to fame, fortune and independence? The whole tradition of a century in poetry and fiction, in ethical teaching and scholastic training has filled the young man of the artisan class with the desire to go and do all these things. It is with pain

and difficulty, with the utmost regret and a lingering and reluctant dissatisfaction that he surrenders the hope of conquering fate and a hostile environment and becoming a small edition of the Superman.

Just as with the small trader, so is it with the artisan. The small "capital" which was to function as the Aladdin lamp and bring Genii to aid them in their fight, to open glorious palaces for them and to place at their disposal riches which seemed to them incalculable proves to be no "capital" at all, but a most elusive possession destined perhaps in the long run to cause them more heartache than joy.

Small trader and artisan are both subject to the same economic law, they both occupy a precarious foothold, every day sees numbers of their class precipitated into the abyss of proletarianism or common labor, and every day they find their hold loosening and precipitation into the abyss ever more likely. The process of development brings them closer to the dispossessed, their interests become more closely involved with those who have lost hold or have never had it and they begin to look at their economic problems rather from the standpoint of the mass of the craftless and their own probable position in that mass of craftless than from their position as craftsmen, destined to permanent superiority over their fellows.

The same thing is true also, it may be parenthetically observed, of the small tradesmen who are dependent for their living upon the custom of the working class. They discover that their interests are more closely bound up with those of

the working class than with their own class, that consequently in increasing numbers they tend to show their preference for the working class point of view by voting the Socialist ticket at election.

When the proletarian attitude of mind is once attained the revolutionary attitude is adopted as a matter of course for the proletarian cannot be otherwise than revolutionary. The proletarian is a revolutionist of necessity, simply because he is a proletarian. Hence those who adopt the proletarian point of view are, as we have seen, necessarily revolutionary. This revolutionary tendency thereupon makes itself felt in the struggle in the shop, or, as it grows endeavors to find a means of expression in that struggle. But such a means of expression cannot be found in the old craft union. That truth was recognized quite early in the revolutionary movement. Socialists who had early caught the proletarian idea and were correspondingly eager to try conclusions with the capitalistic enemy, found in the pure and simple trade union their greatest stumbling block. The craft union was obviously of no assistance to them in their struggle with the dominant capitalism. The tendency of the craft unions to negotiate agreements and contracts with the employers, the constant reiteration of the stupid lie that there is an identity of interest between employer and employed and the actual support of capitalistic interests in political matters by the craft unions roused the revolutionary portion of the working class to anger which in its turn provoked recriminations from these in the leadership of the craft unions so that the war between the Socialists and the pure and simple, i. e., alleged non-political trade unionists, in-

creased in intensity from year to year and formed the basis of a widely spread, bitter and exceedingly vituperative controversy.

The result of this essential difference between the point of view of the average craft unionism and that of the revolutionary socialist was that in many instances the latter ceased to lay any stress upon unionism and in many cases even denounced it as unnecessary and of no real value to the proletariat. This still further added to the tumult and the confusion and the non-political unionists responded to the attacks of the political proletarians with the charge that the latter were opposed to organized labor and paid no attention to the economic necessities of the working class. In this charge there was for a considerable period more than a grain of truth, for the Socialists being wrapped up in the contemplation of an ultimate ideal tended to become more and more abstract and remote from the actual fight of the proletarian.

The truth at last dawned upon these latter that the unions were a necessity and that no parliamentary action could take the place of the economic fight at the point of production. Still this discovery in itself was not sufficient, for a considerable body in the Socialist movement thereupon endeavored to make terms with the pure and simple craft union movement without any apparent understanding that the two movements were contradictory and could not exist side by side for any length of time.

Economic progress, however, as above briefly described, was busy upon the minds of the craft unionists, and just in proportion as the craft

property disintegrated did they become revolutionary, and a totally different aspect of the struggle between employer and employed began to engross their attention.

The struggle began to take on a new form. The property of the employer in the tools began to be challenged and there arose a claim for possession of the tools on the part of the workers which has so far practically declared itself in the new tactic known as *Sabotage*. This consists in the partial crippling of plants and in interference with the process of production by tampering with that factor in production, the absolute title to which was granted by former unionists to be in the capitalist class. Now that title is denied; and though the Courts may enforce the title of the capitalist in his constant capital, his tools and machinery, it is obvious that the Court decree is of no avail as against the practical and widespread interference with the capitalist's quiet possession, which would be manifested in any organized *Sabotage* movement.

The intricacy of the factors of production and the general tendency towards consolidation in mechanical processes have tended to destroy the property of the craftsman; on the other hand to considerable extent the property of the capitalist is jeopardized. This property becomes more liable to attack by the workers and more vulnerable at their hands. The conduct of great industrial enterprises, the successful carrying on of work in coal mines and in great factories where the entire business is dependent upon a source of power, where the cost of production is calculated to a nicety and where delay or interruption

or the non-co-ordination of inter-dependent parts of machinery implies not only an immediate money loss but tends to the annihilation of the business itself, if continually repeated, places the safety of the capitalist property and the making of capitalist profits more and more in the hands of the working class.

What prevents the practice of *Sabotage* upon a large scale? Nothing but the surviving notion of contract; nothing but the persistence of the notion that the tools and machinery are the property of the employing capitalist, the survival of the old contractual and rights of property idea which the process of economic development is fast eliminating from the mind of the worker. From the idea of *Sabotage* or interference with the property of the employer for a specific immediate purpose, to the actual custody of the machinery in pursuit of a revolutionary policy is not a very long step; it is, moreover, a very natural one, and then what becomes of the employer? He there-upon is shown to be what he really is, an incubus, who can be abolished not only with impunity, but with actual advantage. There is little doubt of the growth of the practice of *Sabotage* in Europe and the conclusion is inevitable that it will make its appearance here also, and will appeal to increasing numbers of workmen as the conflict between employer and employee grows more intense.

Sabotage, of course, has no justification from the point of view of contract. If the labor relation is a contractual relation, and the title of the employer to tools and instruments of labor is conceded and if it is also conceded that the

worker has property in his craft then *Sabotage* must of necessity be justly subject to the reprobation which is bestowed upon it by the respectable. But if the revolutionary point of view is taken and the property of the employer as well as the craft property of the employee are put out of sight as untenable, if it is admitted that the contract of employment is in reality employment under duress, then a totally different conception of things arises in consequence of this new point of view.

Sabotage appears as a disagreeable incident in a revolutionary campaign, unjustifiable under conditions which exclude the revolutionary notion, but perfectly justifiable in terms of the revolution. A similar case is the cutting off the tails of cows which has been prevalent in some parts of Ireland as a protest against landlord aggressions, and to prevent interference with the return of the peasant to the soil. It may be noted in passing that the attacks upon this Irish form of sabotage are made upon the ground of the destruction of property which causes more indignation among the bourgeois than the suffering of the animals.

Sabotage does not, however, of necessity imply an active interference with the machinery of production, nor such manifestations as might come under the general head of malicious mischief according to the Code. It may take the form of passive resistance and may go no further than the deliberate delaying of work by exaggerated observance of rules actually made by the management of the business and necessary in their broad interpretation of its successful conduct.

Thus at the time of writing there are at Trieste three thousand railway men who are using the system of strict application of the rules of the service with the result that a daily loss estimated at three hundred thousand francs is inflicted by this insidious and almost intangible method of attack. The results of this demonstration are here described in the following words:

No less than 3,000 persons are applying this system at Trieste, and inflict a daily loss of 300,000 francs on the state and capitalists. The results are already felt, especially in the port of Trieste, where the unloaded goods are piled up, as there is no more place in the docks. Such a disorder and obstruction reigns, that carts and vans cannot reach the quays. At the railway station at Trieste is the same condition; the lines are occupied by goods-trains which cannot start because the officials declare that, according to the rules, those trains are overloaded and composed of bad rolling stock. More than 400 railway trucks have already been refused for this reason by the officials. Passenger trains are delayed and cannot enter the stations. The post also works with the utmost scrupulous slowness. The postoffices are besieged by large crowds of merchants who have to wait while the officials are dealing with letters and parcels according to all the rules. Complaints of the public have no effect. The ambulant postmen, who have to transfer the mailbags to the trains, refuse to accept any mailbags from postmen who have not, according to regulations, their papers of identification on them. As it is seen, the Austrian officials know how to carry out this passive resistance against the government. The losses of the trade are enormous, and yet, it seems that the strike has not reached its full development, as the latest news from Istria states that the officials of the coast of Istria are ready to join the movement. The officials of the Slavonian railways have published an appeal to the railwaymen to apply strictly the rules of the service, and the Lombardian railway employes have issued a declaration of solidarity with their comrades at Trieste,

whom they are ready to support. (Solidarity, April 8, 1911.)

There are those who see no distinction between the modern sabotage and the old machine smashing. But the very evident and essential difference shows in reality the distance that the proletariat has traveled since the Thirties. Machine smashing was a protest of the defeated followers of the cottage industry against annihilation by the new machines. Their wrath, inflamed by the ignorance and superstition which their narrow life in small rural communities had engendered and developed, blazed into fury at the devildoms of the new machinery. Their feelings, moreover, were worked upon by the rural clergy, who, representing the interests of the then dominant squirearchy, denounced the inventions as ungodly and the work of the evil one. Machine smashing was a brutal, ineffective and stupid attempt at staying the advance of science and industry. It can only be sympathetically explained by taking into account the sufferings of individuals in a transition stage, for society with a frank brutality consigned that portion of the population which was unable to adapt itself to the new regime to starvation and hopeless misery. It must be remembered also that the machine industry engendered a number of related evils such as child-labor, the separation of families, the breaking up of the group on which the cottage industry depended and the destruction of village life. Sabotage on the active side, however, is a demonstration in favor of the working class at the point of production, and is made not in terms of the individual, but for the benefit of

the class. The motive is a class motive, not an individual one. Moreover the action is directed against the machine, not as a machine, but as the property of the employer and is in reality a claim on the side of the laborer to at least part ownership of the machine, i. e., the tool of production.

Whereas machine smashing was an episode in an early stage of economic development, when the industrial understanding of the masses was still crude, Sabotage is the product of a ripe experience in industrial life. It comes as the expression of a new idea of class interests as directed against what is recognized to be a hostile class. It marks the arrival of a certain portion of the proletariat at a stage when it is able to contemplate the conquest of the means of production; and to take practical steps not consistent with a recognition of the contract of employment and the industrial possession of the employer of the tools of production as his own property. As such it marks a notable attack upon the fundamentals of the existing regime.

It may be conceded that in many of its manifestations it is insignificant and almost contemptible in its smallness, that it may be used for indefensible ends and to gratify private spite, but the same objections may be directed against all such manifestations, and the fact remains that sabotage, that is, organized, intelligent, well directed sabotage, may be a most valuable weapon in the hands of the fighting proletariat.

THE GENERAL STRIKE

A much more important and recent development of revolutionary unionism is the general

strike notion. This notion has advanced progressively and has spread over ever widening areas. First mooted at the International in Geneva in 1866, it has been brought before the International Congresses of the Socialist Parties, where it has always been defeated. But the notion has made headway even among political Socialists and today it receives almost universal approval as a means of achieving political ends or preventing international war. Much of the early opposition to it was due to the exigencies of the fight between Socialism and anarchism, and the latter, being entirely non-parliamentary, naturally took up the general strike as an effective idea. But since the conflict between Socialist and anarchist is now practically at an end and the controversial heat has subsided, even the political Socialists are ready to admit that political movement without industrial support is not sufficient, and thus the general strike has become rehabilitated, at least for the purpose of supplementing political action.

It is not easy to conceive that such a sweeping and all-controlling affair as a general strike, successfully organized and properly carried out, can be relegated to the dust heap. In fact, later developments of the labor movement have shown a marked tendency to consider it as a practicable method for enforcing the will of the proletariat, at least in such matters as international war. So that it is almost safe to assume that the expression "general nonsense," applied to the general strike by the German Social Democrats in the Brussels Congress in 1891, is not likely to be repeated.

In 1902 a demonstration occurred at Barcelona which closely resembled the general strike in that particular place, and soon thereafter a valiant attempt was made in Belgium which included three hundred and fifty thousand men. This latter was an example of the political "mass-strike," as it was intended as a demonstration towards the **gaining** of universal suffrage. Both of these efforts failed. The proponents of the idea blamed the Social Democrats for the failures and the latter on their part laid it at the door of the anarchists. The fact seems to be that neither accusation is correct. The organization of the workers had not gone far enough to render such strikes successful. But the movement in favor of the general strike did not cease, on the contrary, Sweden and Holland both experimented in the same direction later, with the same results, though the action took on a broader scope and the co-ordination of the various parts was obviously better than on preceding occasions.

In the general strike in Hungary in 1904 the government intervened and called the strikers to the colors by the mobilization of reserves to whom no less than eleven thousand strikers belonged. Arnold Roller, to whose pamphlet in "The Social General Strike" (Bauer, New York) the writer of this is indebted, says on this point: "This again proves that the propaganda of the general strike must be supplemented by anti-military propaganda," and seems thereby to admit that the general strike by itself is not altogether a reliable weapon, for if anti-militarism must be taught so effectively that the soldiers will refuse to obey the order to come to the colors, before

the general strike can be successful, it is obvious that it can only come about as the result of effort which has already succeeded in rendering great masses of the proletarian revolutionary. In other words, the general strike would appear to be a culmination rather than a means.

This seems to be a very reasonable conclusion in view of the factors of a general strike. If it is to last for any length of time it implies not only a co-ordination and control which have as yet not been developed even in the most advanced countries, but a definiteness of final purpose which has by no means as yet made itself clear to the mind of the masses of the proletariat. As a revolutionary proceeding directed towards the attainment of a political object it is conceivably a very useful weapon, for the ruling class, weighing in the balance concessions in liberalism, which have probably been granted in other countries without any particular harm befalling those in economic control, against actual economic loss and dislocation of business on a great scale, will be not unlikely to yield. In fact, the general strike thus devoted to a political end can hardly fail of success. Its practical probability, however, for such a purpose comes rather under the head of politics. The recent great English strikes mark the highest point yet reached.

It is sufficient to state here that the chief advocates of the general strike do not regard it as a piece of political mechanism, but as a self-sufficient revolutionary demonstration terminating the present industrial form and leading to the substitution for it of another. In fact, the statement is made that the social general strike

means the emancipation of the proletariat; in other words, the general strike is the revolution. Taking this view it will be seen that the general strike is an end, which may indeed never be reached, but the very contemplation of which tends to bring the proletariat more closely together and to abolish dividing lines, whether of craft, or of country. For the general strike in its completeness implies the international general strike.

Concomitant with the growth of the general strike notion other processes are at work which tend to cause that notion to take a position relative to them, and thus prevent the general strike from standing out as a single absolute against a background of industrial tyranny. In fact, the general strike advocate who sees in it the great, sole, and infallible remedy is like all peddlers of panaceas—somewhat in danger of becoming a quack. The general strike is a consummation of an ideal which, like most other ideals, may never find its consummation, but which in its life brings into being other and more important forces than the ideal itself. Its very failures have proved its tremendous efficacy as an educational means. It has caused a complete overhauling of the machinery of trade organization; it is rapidly educating the minds of the workers to a comprehension of the real merits of the struggle in which they are engaged, and it has been an agency in the creation of new forms of labor organization which cannot but have a most important effect upon the future.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

Out of the discussion on the general strike arose a new concept of unionism, which is destined to play an ever more considerable part in the industrial history of the modern world. The general strike notion, once adopted, the question of its feasibility led naturally to the overhauling of the weapons in labor's arsenal, with a view to the determining of their fitness for the end in view.

Such a discussion did not proceed from a *priori* reasoning, it came about, as always, from the actual economic circumstances confronting the working class. The development of industry with its great interrelations of productive machinery, and its concentration of capital; the separation of the functions of capitalist and entrepreneur which had necessarily developed from the formation of the corporation and the joint stock company; the always persistent and sometimes tragically sudden elimination of the crafts by the discovery of new methods of manufacture, in short, the wholly body of industrial changes, which together constitute the latter day greater capitalistic revolution, necessitated a change in working class tactics, if that class were not to be entirely submerged.

The political revolt, as demonstrated in the political Socialist movement, was disappointing in results, and the political wrangles were already beginning to wear on the patience of the proletariat. Great figures emerged from the ranks of the political fighters and played their parts on the stage of politics, but the general condition

of the masses did not seem to be improved thereby.

The notion thereupon spread rapidly that the workers would be obliged to take up the cudgels in their own behalf on the economic field and the interest of the proletariat began to be turned from political to economic organization.

It was not at all remarkable that this should have occurred first in the Latin countries. Neither political Socialism nor craft unionism had gained any very strong foothold in these countries, largely because of the backwardness of development of industry. France in particular had passed through characteristically strange experiences with the labor representation in the chamber. Under these circumstances the general strike notion flared into prominence and became the subject of heated discussions, until in 1895, the Confederation Generale du Travail came into existence and what has since become known as French syndicalism began to play its very important role in industrial matters. Henceforward syndicalism and industrial unionism became important subjects of discussion in labor bodies throughout the world.

Its main argument rests upon the concentration of modern industry which has rendered the craft form of organization obsolete as a fighting weapon. It is precisely the craft form which has become thoroughly established in the English speaking countries and the dislodgment of it as the typical fighting labor organization constitutes the main point of conflict in labor circles at the present day. The essentials of the craft form of organization, with its weaknesses and limitations,

have already been discussed. Owing, however, to the tendency of governing bodies to perpetuate themselves, owing also to the jurisdictional disputes which arise in the craft organizations and to the craft "patriotism," which springs from them, the repair of these defects is very difficult of accomplishment. A bristling hedge of conservatism guards the existing organizations directly a criticism is made. The union officials, dreading the result of a transformation of the organization upon their salaries and position, vehemently denounce any tendencies towards such changes. Only the working of the actual facts upon the minds of the masses of the union members can effect any result. The effect of the facts is, however, unavoidable and time is working its changes in the union labor psychology so that we see a constantly growing tendency even in the ranks of the conservative craft unions to abolish the limitations of craft unionism and to take on a form constantly more closely approximating industrial unionism.

In the Latin countries, however, this obstacle of craft unionism has not to any great extent existed. Neither, on the other hand, had political manipulation tended to mislead the workers into paths of political meandering, much more to the advantage of the small bourgeois than to that of the proletarian.

This lack of experience has its advantages as well as its drawbacks, for it enables the proletariat to go straight to the point at issue and to develop on the economic field directly that strength upon which it must rely when it comes to blows with the greater capitalism. It may be

objected that in the neglect of the political manifestation the Latin Syndicalist movement overlooks manifold advantages, and minimizes the importance of political action. This is probably true, but the fact remains that it is much more important to develop the economic strength in the industrial struggle than to develop a premature political manifestation which under all the circumstances of the case is bound to function more as a small bourgeois than as a proletarian product. The political reflex is bound to come; it is a reaction which cannot be avoided; given the economic impulse the political effect takes place to the full extent of the power of that impulse. Without the economic impulse on the industrial field we get no proletarian political reflex, we may, and indeed, do get small bourgeois reactions, but without industrial organizations we cannot possibly get proletarian political manifestations.

But more than all these abstract considerations, which, after all, appeal more to the student than to the man in the street, with the ordinary workman, who is more concerned with getting his daily wage than with anything more remote, actual practical results count. The average trade unionist finds himself confronted by a very uncomfortable situation. His security which has up to the present depended upon the utility of the strike and the boycott is imperilled by the declining efficacy of these weapons against the present organization of employers. The strike of a craft is impotent against an aggregation of crafts of which that one craft is merely an isolated factor. The pick of the skilled unionists,

with large treasuries and with a fairly complete control of the labor situation, as they have thought, find themselves rudely challenged when the call to action comes and the fancied superiority ebbs away before the actual situation. Menaced on the one hand by the overpowering strength of their organized enemies, their craft eaten away from under their feet by the encroachments of the industrial processes which have, little by little, destroyed their standing ground, and surrounded by a hungry crowd of out of work "unskilled" men whom the very process of machine development has converted into highly skilled, at least as regards their effectiveness in keeping the works going during a time of strike, they confront a situation as novel as painful. It is no wonder then that in the hour of defeat they examine the structure of their organization and endeavor to discover the reasons for their failure. They find it in the fact that they are unable to contend against the industrial power of the masters in terms of the craft union.

Those who have been forced from the position of craftsmen into the ranks of the unskilled by the operation of the same forces also are made aware of their whereabouts. They are unassociated. The crafts are iron to their endeavors to join the union; they are confronted by the gates and enclosures which the so-called skilled have raised about themselves to maintain their hold on the market. The body of which they form a part is unorganized; it is a horde seeking food and shelter where it best can, self-devouring, in great part a roaming horde. But a horde may be organized. Given the proper stimulus

horde

which can impel the individuals of the horde to seek a common end and the secret of organization is discovered. Henceforward the horde becomes an organized body and all the better organized and the more enduring in that it has suffered the hardships and known the adversities of poverty and lack of organization.

Common labor, with no differentiating qualities, common unskilled labor, is the fundamenetal of such an organization, which must obviously permit of the widest possible extension and fulfill the deepest and most intimate needs.

This opportunity for the organization of the unskilled occurs really only in the industrial form of organization. The crafts, it is true, are endeavoring to organize the migratory unskilled labor, but they must fail because the crafts can never allow the unskilled the necessary voice in labor affairs. The unskilled man approaches the question from an entirely different standpoint than that of the craftsman. His attitude is naturally and unavoidably revolutionary, for he has nothing to conserve. Hence his presence in the same oraginization with the craftsman, organized in the craft union, is distressing to the latter, for the unskilled will make demands which the craftsman cannot agree that the unskilled man can have, and the unskilled man, by virtue of his basic position, can, if he be organized, upset the entire trade structure and bring the craftsman, willy-nilly, along with him. This explains the following dialogue between the writer of this and a prominent trade union leader.

Q. Are you organizing the unskilled?

A. No.

Q. Why?

A. Because if we organize them they will want something right away and then we shall be in a bad fix.

Q. Are you organizing the foreign laborers?

A. No.

Q. Why?

A. Because they have no vote, and for the same reasons that we are not organizing the unskilled generally.

This, which is a bona fide conversation, explains the attitude of the craft union man to the unskilled laborer. It could not be otherwise in his present view of the functions and ends of unionism.

But directly there is an attempt made at industrial organization a new point of view becomes necessary. All grades of workers in the industry must be brought in and from the point of view of the control of the industry all are equally important. Hence there comes about a gradual levelling up of the lower grades of labor with no levelling down of the higher. Indeed, the problem is to at least maintain the best level for the skilled and raise that of the unskilled, the very antithesis of the existing plan which endeavors to reap benefits for the skilled without improving the position of the unskilled, and thus keeps in reserve a hungry army, ready to rush in and devour in times of strikes and bad trade.

It will be thus readily seen that the industrial union is revolutionary. This is clearly shown in the literature of the movement. Thus, to quote from the INDUSTRIAL SYNDICALIST, published in England, of which Tom Mann is the editor:

THAT IT WILL BE AVOWEDLY AND CLEARLY REVOLUTIONARY IN AIM AND METHOD.

Revolutionary in method, because it will refuse to enter into any long agreements with the masters, whether with legal or state backing, or merely voluntarily; and because it will seize every chance of fighting for the general betterment—gaining ground and never losing any.

Again, on the same point, Eugene V. Debs, in his letter to Tom Mann of July 10th, 1910, published in the publication above referred to, says:

Industrial evolution has made industrial unionism possible and revolutionary education and agitation must now make it inevitable. To this end we should bore from within and without, the industrial unionists within the old unions working together in perfect harmony with the industrial unionists upon the outside engaged in laying the foundation and erecting the superstructure of the new revolutionary economic organization, the embryonic, industrial democracy.

The difficulties we have encountered on this side since organizing the Industrial Workers have largely been overcome and I believe the time is near at hand when all industrial unionists will work together to build up the needed organization, and when industrial unionism will receive such impetus as will force it to the front irresistibly in response to the crying need of the enslaved and despoiled workers in their struggle for emancipation.

The economic organization of the working class is as essential to the revolutionary movement as the sun is to light and the workers are coming more and more to realize it, and the triumph of industrial unionism over craft unionism is but a question of time, and this can be materially shortened if we but deal wisely and sanely with the situation.

It appears everywhere also that industrial unionism is partly the result of discontent with the effects of political socialism, as so far shown in the actions of the political socialist parties.

The French and the Italian papers and pamphlets naturally take this view, as they have always been anti-parliamentary, having come under the anarchist influence early in their development, for owing to the industrial backwardness of the Latin countries the propaganda of Bakounin was always preferred to that of Marx by the revolutionary element. But the Northern and Teutonic countries are showing very much the same feeling and there is a growing dissatisfaction with such parliamentary representation as the proletariat is supposed to have had at the hands of the regular official socialists. Tom Mann, who is promoting the idea of industrial unionism in England and is careful to say that industrial unionism is not anti-political, says, however, it is non-political. In his pamphlet "PREPARE FOR ACTION" (vol. 1, No. 1), The Industrial Syndicalist, July, 1910, Guy Bowman, 4 Maude Terrace, Walthamstow, London, published), he says:

Those who have been in close touch with the movement know that in recent years dissatisfaction has been expressed in various quarters at the results so far achieved by our Parliamentarians.

Certainly nothing very striking in the way of constructive work could reasonably be expected from the minorities of Socialists and labor men hitherto elected. But the most modern and fair minded are compelled to declare that, not in one country but in all, a proportion of those comrades who, prior to being returned, were unquestionably revolutionary, are no longer so after a few years in Parliament. They are revolutionary neither in their attitude towards existing society nor in respect of present day institutions. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that many seem to have constituted themselves apologists for existing society, showing a degree of studious respect for bourgeois conditions, and a toleration of bour-

geois methods, that destroys the probability of their doing any real work of a revolutionary character.

I shall not here attempt to juggle with the quibble of "Revolution or Evolution,"—or to meet the contention of some of those under consideration that it is not revolution that is wanted. "You cannot change the world and yet not change the world."

REVOLUTION IS THE MEANS OF, NOT THE ALTERNATIVE TO, EVOLUTION

I simply state that a working class movement that is not revolutionary in character is not of the slightest use to the working class.

In defining the characteristics of French Syndicalism to which the Industrial unionism of the English speaking countries looks for much of its inspiration, Tom Mann says in the pamphlet above quoted:

They are, for the most, anti-patriotic and anti-militarist, *e. g.*, they declare that the workers have no country and are not prepared to fight in the interests of a bureaucracy; but most distinctly are prepared to fight for the overturn of capitalism in France and elsewhere. They are "non" not "anti" parliamentary.

The preamble of the Industrial Workers of World, which in 1905 took up a definite position with regard to political action, was in 1908 revised at Chicago to read: "That to the end of promoting industrial unity and of securing necessary discipline within the organization, the I. W. W. refuses all alliances, direct or indirect, with existing political parties, or anti-political sects, and disclaims responsibility for any individual opinion or act which may be at variance with the purposes herein expressed." This attitude has been variously interpreted. Some have held it to be anarchistic and antagonistic to polit-

ical action. Others, whose opinions Tom Mann voices in the following words explanatory of the above quotation (*Industrial Syndicalist*, Vol. 1, No. 6): "This meant that they were neither pro nor anti-political, and that they took up an industrial position only."

Herve, in "*La Guerre Sociale*," has explained more than once that he is not opposed to political action as such, and in fact would use his vote under circumstances in which he fancied that it would be of any value to proletarian revolutionary action.

The following bold statement is made by the English Industrialists (*Industrial Syndicalist*, Vol. I, No. 8): "Parliamentary Action is secondary in importance to Industrial Action; it is industrial action alone that makes political action effective; but with or without Parliamentary action industrial Solidarity will insure economic freedom, and therefore the abolition of capitalism and all its accompanying poverty and misery."

William D. Haywood, perhaps the most powerful of the advocates of Industrial unionism in the United States, says (*International Socialist Review*, May, 1911):

There is this justification for political action, and that is to control the forces of the capitalists that they use against us; to be in a position to control the government so as to make the work of the army ineffective; so as to totally abolish the secret service and the force of detectives. That is the reason that you want the power of government. That is the reason that you should fully understand the power of the ballot.

Now, there is not anyone, Socialist, S. L. P., Industrial Worker, or any other working man or woman, no matter what society you belong to, but what believes

in the ballot. There are thousands—I am one of them—who refuse to have the ballot interpreted for them. I know, or think I know, the power of it, and I know that the industrial organization, as I stated in the beginning, is its broadest interpretation. I know, too, that when the workers are brought together in a great organization they are not going to cease to vote. That is when the workers will begin to vote, to vote for directors to operate the industries in which they are all employed.

The claim is also made for Industrial unionism, that it is working class socialism as distinguished from what may be denominated the petit-bourgeois socialism which has so far dominated the councils of the Socialist Parties in this country and in Europe. E. J. B. Allen (Vol. 1, No. 5, *Industrial Syndicalist*) says on this point:

Industrial unionism is working-class socialism; it is the only logical form of working-class organization able to cope with the conditions that have been inaugurated by the great development of machinery, and the minute subdivision and simplification of industry attendant thereto. The industrial unionist seeks to unite all the workers of an industry into one union, and to establish a complete co-operation of all the industrial organizations, with the object of not only obtaining the best results in the daily wage-wars, but also to effect their emancipation from the system of wage-slavery.

The union movement is the only one capable of uniting the workers as a class on the grounds of their economic interests. The real interests of the workers are the full proceeds of their labor, their productive energy; and this necessarily means the taking into possession of the mines, railways, factories, and mills, by those who operate them.

We have seen that labor legislation is of little use without an adequate organization to see that the reform regulations are properly enforced. We have seen, further, that an adequate organization can enforce reforms, whether on the statute book or not.

Many working class representatives have been elected to public bodies, and after some time have passed "to the other side of the barricade;" the industrial union is the only safeguard against wholesale treachery that the workers can have. It is the bulwark alike against a state bureaucracy or a military despotism.

It thus appears that the Industrial Unionism is contemplated as a form of labor organization, which involves political consequences of the most sweeping character, and which, while not laying stress upon parliamentarism, contemplates the acquisition of real political power as a matter of course. It is therefore considered by its advocates not only as an instrument for the attainment of vast industrial and economic ends, but as a means for the gaining of real political power by obtaining that economic power on which in the last analysis all political power admittedly rests.

The notion of mutualistic group co-operation, which the anarchists proposed to substitute for the competitive system, has, of course, disappeared with the competitive system, and the notion of a domination of the great industrial manifestations of the modern world carries with it and necessarily implies the notion of the world domination.

To this end industrial unionism, by virtue of its inherent internationalism, of necessity largely contributes. Anti-militarism has been stated to be an essential element in the French form and will undoubtedly appear wherever industrial unionism manifests itself. But internationalism is absolutely incomprehensible to the craft unions. Their small trade view, with their nar-

row and prejudiced regard of the interests of the workers in the mass, render such a breadth of comprehension as is implied in internationalism impossible to them. The same stupid narrowness pervades the Socialist supporters and representatives of the craft unions, that is to say, practically the entire official body of the Socialist Party in this country. It was generally whispered that the United States delegation at the last International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen had been largely instrumental in preventing the proper development of the war against war campaign in the Socialist movement. The following statement by Robert Rives La Monte (*International Socialist Review*, May, 1911) on that point is very illuminative and in view of the known influences at work in the Socialist Party may be unhesitatingly accepted.

At the International Congress at Copenhagen our comrades, Edward Vaillant, of France, and Keir Hardie, of England, went to the root of the matter by introducing an amendment to the Peace Resolution, declaring that in the event of war the Socialists in the countries involved should and would do their utmost to bring about a general strike in the transportation industries and in those industries providing the munitions of war.

This amendment received such strong support from France and England that had the American delegation taken a strong stand in its favor, it is possible it would have been passed. But the American delegation took no such stand. It was not built that way. It did not want to "recognize the principle of the general strike." It was afraid of "playing into the hands of the Impossibilists." It apparently believed that the best way to follow Comrade Hillquit's advice to "discard the revolutionary phrases for revolutionary action," was carefully to avoid both.

The very idea that such International action is sufficiently feasible to be worthy of serious consideration is in itself a victory. But it is notably a victory which the craft unionists cannot pursue. It is not only impossible for them but inconceivable by them. The attitude of mind produced by a contemplation of the necessities and limitations of craft unionism is, speaking without regard to necessary exceptions, practically and essentially unchangeable. . It is this which makes the development of the already established craft unions into industrial unions almost unthinkable. The future and the great things of the future are quite incompatible with the survival of the craft union notion while at the same time they harmonize well with the fundamental doctrines of industrial unionism.

Wherever we turn in the examination of industrial unionism we find the same great field of vision and the same implied action upon the part of a united proletariat. It is this fact which gives industrial unionism such a promise of the future, which transforms it from a mere machine for raising wages and diminishing hours into an engine of human liberation. The essential difference and vital distinction between the small bourgeois and the modern proletarian are obvious in the different regard which craft unionism and industrial unionism turn upon modern industrial relations. To the former the contract of employment is the impassable gulf which must be recognized as permanent, therefore, all there is in life for the proletarian is to bargain shrewdly, to make smart and clever turns of trade, to gain a little here, to knock off a little there. Indeed,

the representative of the craft unionist becomes by virtue of that unerring instinct which makes the common people hit on just the right word, the "business agent" of the union, the dickerer in general for the members of the craft.

How different is the socialist conception which underlies industrial unionism and which compels the industrial unionist to take every possible step looking to his final acquisition of the product and the tools of production. The aim glorifies his course; internationalism, the anti-military campaign, an ever widening confederation of labor, more comprehensive, more human, follows in the wake of the industrial movement; it becomes pregnant with the greatest promise to humanity. It transforms the labor movement from an unco-ordinated scramble for isolated small bargains into a coherent and harmonious international progress towards a definite goal. ✓

The pettiness and cheapness inherent in the craft union disappear in the splendor of the promise which is unfolded to the worker in the program of industrial unionism.

It is doubtful if any movement in history has required as much from its apologists as has the craft union movement. The vice of small business has beset it, the ambitions of the small trader have been mirrored in the ambitions of the craft union leader. Being hucksters they could not avoid the huckster disposition. Their personal ambitions have been not with their class, but outside their class. The union leaders have therefore used their working class as a stepping stone by which to lift themselves into a more comfortable and secure position, consequently the whole

craft union movement has been marked by a succession of personal treacheries on the part of labor leaders. The inherent brutality implied in the craft union point of view has caused its exponents to neglect the weaker elements of society and to ignore the claims of that suffering portion of the proletariat whose needs are paramount.

The very term, industrial unionism, implies the opposite of all this. The industrial structure comprises all the factors; the woman worker, the unskilled, the migratory, the roustabout, are all part and parcel of the industry at which, for the time being, they happen to be employed. They are not derelict, they are component and necessary factors in the composition of the working class, specific and indestructible elements in the particular industry in which they take part. No matter if the form of the industry changes, they change with it. An unskilled laborer of today may be one week engaged in labor work at a foundry and during the next week may be laboring in the building trade. Such a man is impossible in the craft organization. It is true that some steps have been made to incorporate him in the American Federation of Labor, under the charter of the United Laborers, but, as we have seen elsewhere, the existence of an unskilled labor union is incompatible with the structure of the A. F. of L. To the industrial unionist such a person presents no problem at all. He falls into his category spontaneously, being at one time under the metal trades jurisdiction and at another under that of the building trades, and all the time under the great combined industrial

organization. So simple is the idea, so obviously practical. Yet, a few years ago the very thought would have been impossible. Its practicability has resulted from the development of industry itself from that operation of industrial processes which have rendered the industrial form of organization at once the most obvious and the most essential.

It is thus that in Industrial Unionism we get the first real attempt at a realization of that class war which has been so vehemently and so vainly proclaimed for so long. The gathering together of a band of small bourgeois and craft unionists into a group, denominating that group a political party, singing the Marseillaise, indifferently, badly, and declaring a class war has almost reached its limit of entertainment.

With this sort of revolution goes, too, the touching faith in the state as an employer. Municipal ownership and State ownership, translated into the dulcet expressions, "Municipal Socialism" and "State Socialism" are being found out. The sweating exposed in government industries, the failure of the government to be even a "good employer," a failure equally conspicuous in Europe as in the United States has given the government ownership advocates pause. The most striking and illuminative occurrence, however, was the French Railroad Strike of 1910, when the government did not hesitate to call the striking workmen to the colors as reservists and to exercise its military functions in support of its tyrannical behavior as an employer of labor. Under such conditions there is little wonder that the Municipal

and State ownership political campaigns cease to excite notable interest on the part of the working class.

The conflict is to be converted into a class war beginning at the point of production. The industrial Unionist favors the ever widening development of that conflict until overwhelming forces are brought into the field. Thus W. F. Hay (Industrial Syndicalist, Vol I, No. 5) says: "We must prepare for action; while we shall still find possibly that conciliation has its uses for us, just as diplomacy has for a nation, yet behind that diplomacy there must be force!—force strongly organized, conscious of its mission and its strength—force so applied and driven home by constantly increasing pressure that the masters will have to give to force what they deny to justice. We must organize in such a way that no matter how few men are involved at first, if a principle is at stake we must make the area of the struggle rapidly larger and larger, until such vast interests are involved as to compel a settlement in our favor."

✓ So that the industrial unionism terminates as it began in the general strike idea. Its culmination is the general strike and the successful general strike is the means of the social revolution, in fact, the successful general strike may be called the social revolution itself.

Perhaps the American organization, the Industrial Workers of the World has the most complete recognition of the functions and aims of industrial unionism. This naturally arises from the fact that the craft unions are in possession of the field in the United States and in

order to make its position sufficiently clear the I. W. W. must state it accurately and concisely. The Preamble to the Constitution of the I. W. W. reads as follows:

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life. Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trades unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work, we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the every-day struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

Knowing, therefore, that such an organization is absolutely necessary for our emancipation, we unite under the following constitution.

The constitution provides for an organization composed of actual wage workers. The real basis of the organization is the Local Industrial Union to be composed of "All the actual wage workers in a given industry in a given locality welded together in trade or shop branches, or as the particular requirements of the said industry may render necessary."

A further development of this fundamental unit consists in the National Industrial Unions, whose functions are thus described; "Whenever there are more than five local industrial unions in any one industry having a joint membership of three thousand or more National Industrial Unions shall maintain all communications between Local Industrial Unions and General Headquarters until such time as the Department to which the National Industrial Union belongs is organized."

The Industrial Department consists of "Two or more National Industrial Unions aggregating a membership of not less than 10,000 members. The Departments shall have general supervision over the affairs of the National Industrial Unions composing same, provided the general Executive Board shall have power to control these departments in matters concerning the welfare of the general organization."

The Departments are designated as follows:

Department of Mining Industry.

Department of the Transportation Industry.

Department of Metal and Machinery Industry.

Department of Glass and Pottery Industry.

Department of Food Stuffs Industry.

Department of Brewery, Wine, and Distillers' Industry.

Department of Floricultural, Stock and General Farming Industries.

Department of the Building Industry.

Department of the Textile Industries.

Department of the Leather Industries.

Department of the Wood Service Industries.

Department of Miscellaneous Manufacturing.

Thus we get an organization which differs in all essentials from the trade union as heretofore known. The craft element serves not as the essential unit but as subsidiary to the industrial essential unit. Not that the craft is refused recognition. On the contrary it is distinctly provided that the local industrial unions are to consist of workers organized either according to the trade or according to the shop as may be most suitable under the circumstances of the particular case.

It is exceedingly improbable that the exact lines of organization as here laid down will be followed without deviation. In fact, many important structural changes will unquestionably be made. But in its general scope, and as regards elasticity, subordination, discipline, and all the elements of successful proletarian organization it is indubitably much superior to any of its predecessors.

The Industrial Union, at least for the present, and as far into the future as we are now able to see must stand out as the essentially, proletarian organization; upon which in some form or another the working class will have to rely more and more in its conflict with the industrial overlords.

IV

POLITICS

Politics is generally defined as the science of government. This smacks somewhat of the Renaissance when princes amused themselves with what they called politics, and practiced a devious and complicated art which bore some relation to the obscure and generally disreputable trade of diplomacy. Where a privileged class is entrenched in power, or the members of a privileged class are so organized that they control the government, politics is an art or game allowing of the playing for stakes, in the shape of office, and making a pleasurable and exciting pastime for those whose leisure is assured by virtue of their economic security.

The existence of a limited class enjoying the suffrage and the consequent accentuation of family importance contribute to make the holding of office more secure and politics a dignified pursuit. Under such circumstances we find that certain very able individuals are produced; that the arts of political controversy and oratory are cultivated and that the game proceeds according to certain well observed regulations. That, in short, politics has its etiquette as, indeed, even military art has under such circumstances. Such an attitude was naturally rendered so much the easier by the interesting fact that gentlemen in question seldom hurt one another but the in-

feriors paid in their persons and in their property for the game played by their superiors.

England and the United States, particularly, the Southern States, in the earlier stages of national development, furnish abundant examples of this attitude in political affairs. The great figures of the dominant political parties strut across the stage of history; their very manner is the same; the style of speech is moreover almost identical and both English and American political leaders sought their models in the classical statesmen and orators who were produced under conditions economically very similar to those which made the landholding class in England and the Southern aristocracy in this Country for a time the governing power. Numerous instances to the same effect may be found in European history. It may be safely stated that where a class is supreme and has no immediate fear for its future eminence, and where that class practically controls the avenues of public distinction, politics is an art or game manipulated for the pleasure and exhilaration of members of the dominant class.

It is a game played, however, within certain limits, for the dominant class takes good care never to imperil its own interests. The joustings of the rivals are confined within narrow lists and none but gentlemen can wear armor and ride curvetting horses in face of the vulgar. It is the art of manipulating governmental power. It frequently under the circumstances above described, is no more than the struggle of rival individualism for position and is practically always so where the contest for political supremacy of

rival economic classes has not become sufficiently obvious to cause the elimination of the personal question in a fight for actual existence.

Such a condition of society as we have been considering implies that the democratic point in development has not been reached. It necessitates a limited superior class.

But when in the course of economic and consequently of governmental development we arrive at the stage of democracy, the term politics begins to take on another and more sinister meaning than heretofore.

This secondary meaning is given in the dictionaries as "The management of a political party." This, however, implies something more intellectual and subtle than what we term politics at the present day and is in reality a sort of statesmanship which consists in the shaping of material to conscious political ends, an art which has become almost lost owing largely to the rapidity with which modern conditions change their mutual relations by reason of the revolutionary character of the economic substructure-scientific processes, technic, mechanical development, and the like.

This secondary meaning of politics is therefore nothing more than the art of marshalling votes. Government in a democracy, no matter what its real basis, must rest ostensibly at least on a popular basis, that is, on a voting majority, and as there is a demand for those who are able to so manipulate public opinion or lack of opinion, or whatever else tends to set a majority of people voting in a given direction at a given time, the supply is provided to meet the demand

and the politician as we know him in this most modern of democracies steps upon the scene.

The object of modern politics is the marshalling of votes. But as we have seen, there are conflicting economic classes and therefore conflicting economic ends to be secured which of necessity imply conflicting governmental concepts. So the votes are marshalled in the interest of the governmental needs of the dominant economic class. The interests of the various sections of the dominant class may not be identical, in fact they seldom are, but give rise to the play of politics in a modern democracy somewhat analogous to the play of politics heretofore described under conditions prior to the advent of a democracy.

The whole of the capitalistic era has been filled with just such conflicts. Conservative and Liberal, Republican and Democrat, what are they but representatives of the diverse interests of the various sections of the capitalist overlords, playing, however, within a limited sphere, so that the political manoeuvrings do not threaten the actual persistence of the overlordship?

The essential, therefore, of political action is an economic basis; one must discover an economic foundation for a political party, and no other foundation will do. But when once that economic basis is found or declares itself, forthwith and automatically a political party forms itself upon that economic basis. It may not always be a political party as we generally use the expression, that is, an organized voting body, whose avowed purpose is the employment of recognized constitutional methods for the pur-

pose of obtaining governmental power, but it will be a political party in the sense that it aims at control of the government whether it uses votes for that purpose or not. In the slang phrase of the platform it becomes a revolutionary or an evolutionary political party. (A popular but quite idiotic distinction.)

In a democracy it naturally becomes a voting political party, and so far, modern democracy is a great advance in that it forms a ready way of determining the relative strength of opposing forces without recourse to physical conflicts. When an inferior economic class has developed sufficient strength to be effective that class obtains the ballot and the struggle is transferred from the physical force plane to that of voting.

Even when the class in question has no ballot it obtains the suffrage as soon as its display of economic strength is sufficient to render its acquisition a matter of course, or its support is necessary to an economic superior.

Perhaps the case of the chartists is one of the most conspicuous in this connection. A proletarian uprising based upon an economic condition, *i. e.*, the status of a wage-working class under a regime of free competition and laissez-faire eventuated in an abortive uprising for the purpose of securing a political leverage. It will be observed that the demands of the chartists were purely political demands and that the insurrectionists failed to achieve their object. The cause of the failure was, of course, lack of material to achieve. The legitimacy of the demands and their politico-ethical significance were in-

dubitable, for very nearly all of them have been since admitted and have become statute law. Why then did the chartists fail? The fact is that though they had an economic basis for their political demands they had no material economic power with which to enforce those demands.

Deprived of the ballot and unable to operate in the field of actual politics they turned to politics indirectly, that is, they set to work upon the formation of economic organizations; pure and simple trade unions. In the formation and conduct of these unions they eschewed politics, they ceased to take any notice of actual politics in their economic organizations, in fact they made rules in these organizations against the discussion of politics. But they developed their economic power; they came into conflict with the economic power of the capitalistic overlords in the shop and won victories, step by step, achieving power which forced their opponents to take notice of them and which made their economic position in the state more and more positive.

Just as certain as their economic power grew so also did political recognition grow with it. The franchise which they had vainly sought by insurrectionary means became theirs as soon as the economic force which they wielded became sufficiently great to render the denial of it practically impossible. The reflex in politics was complete; so that the very economic movement, which they had differentiated from a political movement was in itself indirectly political and resulted in the franchise, the entry of the class into political action proper, and the formation of a labor party, which functions as the political

representative of the economic interests of the same class which so unsuccessfully pursued the demands of the charter, a craft union labor political party.

That the victory was not more complete, and that the labor political movement does not function in terms of the proletariat is consequent solely from the fact that the initial economic movement was not proletarian but a movement in the direction of craft protection. The political effect does not transcend the original economic cause; it reflects no more than the actual economic power. In this case the actual economic power was that of the craft trades unions and that certainly was very completely reflected even to the recognition of its personal representatives as cabinet ministers and in many other minor political and magisterial offices.

The same results are seen still more clearly in the later political development in Australia, in fact, practically every advanced country bears marks in its political life of the growth and development of the trade union.

The phrase "To go into politics" on the part of the working class has arisen in a discussion of the question as to whether political economic action is more advisable. There are no grounds for discussion on this subject.

It is obvious that the working class will first function economically, that is, at its point of contact with the opposing class in the shop; but such conflict will have assuredly political results; they are unavoidable. Economic action will mirror itself more and more in political action as it develops strength, and as the ambi-

tion, indeed necessity, to control becomes more and more evident with economic success.

THE GOVERNMENT

The political struggle is for the purpose of gaining governmental power.

The government is the machinery by which the dominant economic class is enabled to control the resources of the community over which it presides. Government implies power of taxation and control of the armed forces. The one supplements the other, and both are exercised by the class in possession of the government.

There is nothing new in this, it is a statement as old as knowledge of the functions of government. Yet it seems to be most difficult for the average man to grasp the notion in its entirety. He has always been taught that government is the will of the people, and yet he finds a government which is manifestly not the will of the people. He is brought into collision with the governmental powers in a fashion which he cannot conceive as being possible did government represent the will of the people, or to be more concise, his will.

The tyranny, the stupidity, and the actual brutality of government and the representatives of government, fill him with dismay and indignation and forthwith he conceives government to be that against which the attack should be directed—the accursed thing, and he is ready to step upon the slippery slide of anarchism.

The government which should be close to the average man according to the democratic theory and which should mirror his ideas and hopes, ap-

pears to be something distinct and distant. It seems to have its own entity and to occupy an exalted sphere, to be clothed with thunder and armed with relentless authority. It is anything but the echo of the voice and aspirations of the plain people who make up the mass of the nation.

If government appears thus to the average American, what must it seem to the man who perforce is brought into collision with it? To the out-of-work tramping in search of employment and without means or resources, the vagrant in the eyes of the law; the government is an enemy which will seize and imprison him. It is a power which will set him to work at enforced labor without pay for sixty or ninety days, and then will loose him upon the community in no better condition than before and just as much an object of governmental attack as ever.

To the ordinary workman who by reason of his poverty, is helpless to rebel against robbery of his wages or against the destroying conditions in which he is obliged to work, government looms up as a colossal monster.

He blames government; and the anarchist lecturer who translates hatred of government in the heart of the outraged workingman into words can always gain the applause and frequently the adherence of the latter.

Yet to attack government is folly. Government is an intangible thing and is impervious to attack. In fact the anarchists themselves who are not satisfied with talk but actually desire to accomplish something, direct their attack from

government to the persons composing government and we get the useless propaganda of the deed. This only tends to render the threatened government officials angry so that they resort to methods of reprisal against which the rebellious are unable to contend, for lack of material power.

For it must be forgotten that the basis of government is material power. To strike at the government or at governmental officials and not to strike at the material power in terms of which government exists is a futility.

Government rests upon the necessities of a superior economic class and cannot be reached except through an attack upon the economic position of that class. As soon as the fact of the illusory nature of governmental power is grasped it is seen at once that there is no need to attack governments or governmental officials, that it is waste effort in fact, even if nothing worse.

Terrorism does not terrify for any long period and is by no means a satisfactory method of disposing of enemies for the simple reason that it is too expensive for the terrorists. It cannot be denied that governmental power may be shocked to a certain extent by terrorism, and that governmental action against the revolution may even be checked momentarily by the confusion due to some blow delivered under the proper conditions. But no such blow can be effective nor can it produce even temporary results unless there is a large body of public opinion behind it and a fighting organization which will render the persistent striking of such blows probable. However, when a revolutionary

movement has attained these dimensions there is little need for such manifestations as are embraced in the propaganda of the deed, and as a matter of fact they seldom occur. Terrorism is in itself an admission of weakness, a confession that the economic power of the revolutionary body is not such that it has been able to develop a political representation, either in the form of a vast economic organization able to operate successfully within a given sphere, or a political party which is able to bring direct pressure upon a government by virtue of the position which its power gives it. It need not be here insisted that one of these manifestations of economic power would imply the other, that both would exist simultaneously and therefore there would be no necessity for any attack upon government. The only demonstration would be against the governing class and would consist on the one hand of knocking out its economic props by industrial conflict, and on the other of directly embarrassing the governmental functions by political action, *i e.*, demonstrations in the representative bodies and in public tending to discredit and to harass the exercise of those functions.

It will be seen, therefore, that the most violent controversial attacks upon government delivered by the anarchists may be fully admitted and yet the movement towards the overthrow of that tyranny not advanced one iota thereby. The young and impetuous, the foolish theorists and the propagandists of the deed dash their head against the intangible thing in vain. Government is phantom-like, one cannot tell where it

begins and where it ends. It is pervasive; it resembles the aura which it is said by some surrounds each human being. One conceives a dislike to the aura of an enemy and proceeds to demolish that aura. A blow at the aura, however, penetrates that most elusive and delicate atmosphere, and the fist coming into contact directly with the proprietor of the aura, the latter retaliates in proportion to his strength. Thus the aura smasher finds that he cannot break that particular emanation without trying conclusions with the person from whom it emanates.

The same argument applies with equal force to what is generally called *direct action*. The anarchistic element in the labor movement impatient against all governments detests and despises parliamentary action. It resents the slowness and the tortuousness of political methods and suspects every development which has the flavor of parliamentarism. In this attitude it has the approval of a much larger proportion of the working class of the country, than is usually suspected, for there is in the ordinary American laboring man a distinct tendency to individualism developed from the history of the country itself. The political exposures and scandals which have attached themselves to administrations of all kinds; the shuffling, the doubling and the actual dishonesty of the professional politicians have filled the mind of the proletariat with detestation of the very name of politics. This attitude may not only be admitted but may frankly be confessed to be justified by events. But, even so, what steps are to be taken, other than the same slow and painful steps which have been heretofore followed?

The answer "Direct Action" leads us nowhere, for it still places us face to face with the question what is Direct Action? If it means the strike in the shop and all the other manifestations that go with the strike, they are with us now.

To try to subordinate the strike and boycott and to place them in an inferior position to the political action movement, is to fail to comprehend the very basis of the proletarian revolt. Political action is a by-product. The real essential fight is the one to be carried on in the shop and the political party with its parliamentary action cannot be other than the reflex of the actual *political* fight. "Direct Action" in the shape of the economic struggle is the very life-blood of the revolutionary movement, but such direct action can no more escape being mirrored in the political manifestations of the time than a man can escape his shadow.

What "Direct Action" is it proposed shall take the place of the political struggle and eliminate the political factor? The general strike? But the general strike cannot take place without a long period of preliminary contests. A general strike does not leap into the field; it is the product of painfully and carefully prepared industrial organization. It implies that many minor industrial conflicts have occurred before the general strike makes its appearance and each one of the minor conflicts will have mirrored itself in politics and will have produced proponents of the strike in the various political bodies. Such a result is unescapable, given a democracy, a prime essential of the social revolution. For, at

least, as far as we know, the development of the proletariat to the point of becoming a revolutionary force implies the development of modern industry with its by-products of popular education, suffrage, and the other concomitants of the regime of liberalism.

To declare that any form of direct action can be independent of political results is to state an obvious absurdity for results will follow automatically. Not only so, but the economic facts which in their turn form the justifying basis of the so-called "Direct Action," will have reflected themselves in the political world in proportion to the degree of importance of those facts as compared with the other economic facts, all of which taken together form the economic milieu of a given society at a given time. Kautsky recognizes this when he says in "The Road to Power" (p. 95 Samuel A. Block, Chicago). "Strikes in those branches of industry that are dominated by employers' associations and which play an important part in the general economic life tend more and more to take on a *political* character. On the other hand, opportunities come with increasing frequency in the purely political struggle (for example, battles for the suffrage) in which mass strikes may be used as an effective weapon."

"So it is that the unions are compelled more and more to take up political tasks. In England as in France, in Germany as well as in Austria, they are turning more and more towards politics. This is the justified kernel of the syndicalism of the Romance countries, unfortunately, however, as a result of its anarchistic origin this kernel

is buried in a desert of anti-parliamentarism. And yet this "Direct Action" of the unions can operate effectively only as an *auxiliary and reinforcement to and not as a substitute for parliamentary action.*"

The second paragraph does not apply to this country, and it is more than doubtful if it applies to Great Britain or France. In Germany, where the bourgeois political conditions are not yet developed in their entirety, the political struggle occupies the center of the stage. It is not, however, a working class political struggle but an effort of the actual economic values of the bourgeoisie to mirror themselves in the national politics. The unions turn more and more towards politics because their economic fight compels it, they must demonstrate their economic values on the political field. The conclusion to the paragraph therefore, is not correct. "Direct Action" is not an "auxiliary and reinforcement" to parliamentary action. It is the impulse and necessary stimulus to parliamentary action. Without "Direct Action," in the sense of economic movement there can be no proletarian parliamentary action; on the other hand economic action cannot avoid reflecting itself in parliamentary action. The most recent and convincing fact in support of this view is the action of the French parliamentary party at the time of the syndicalist railroad strike. The "Direct Action" carried on by anti-parliamentary syndicalists found, in spite of the instigators of the strike, a parliamentary expression, the parliamentarians, on their part, in spite of the fact that they were smarting under parliamentary losses due to the abstention of

direct actionists from the polls at the preceding election were compelled to act as the representatives of the economic power of the direct actionists, and by their political action to render service to the latter on the political field.

The two manifestations are inseparable. The attempted exclusion of one or other would be impossible. If there is any degree of relative importance the balance would incline to the economic side, as the necessary preliminary to any political action.

To shake the economic foundations of the governing class and at the same time to encroach upon the machinery of government in the hands of that class is obviously the present work of the proletarian.

GOOD AND BAD POLITICIANS

Says old Machiavelli, "As sovereignty may be attained in two ways, without being indebted either to fortune or to virtue, it is proper that I should here detail them both; though the examination of one of them might perhaps be more appropriately placed under the article republics. The first is pursued by usurpers who attain power by nefarious means, and the second by such private individuals who are raised by their fellow citizens to the dignity of princes of their native country."

The attainment of power by nefarious means is the chief criticism of the present conditions at the hands of the respectable. The quaint paragraph above quoted makes clear the distinction between the ideal and what actually occurs.

The method of political distinction in a republic is supposed to be and has always been taught

to be the raising by their fellow citizens of private individuals, by reason of their virtues, to conspicuous positions.

But there are usurpers who attain power by nefarious means and against them are launched all the thunders of the respectable.

Politics must be cleansed or the republic will perish, say the Puritans. They maintain that American institutions are as nearly perfect as human ingenuity can devise, but the existence of bad men nullifies the beneficent operation of the institutions. Hence the Augean stables must be flushed and none but good men returned to office. The call for good men has resounded through the land.

In one sense, this cry justifies the criticisms passed upon governmental institutions and is a recognition of the truth of charges made by the muckrakers and a confession of the political abuses which have followed in the train and become the most notorious advertisement of the greater capitalism.

The latter of the two methods of obtaining political distinction as given by Machiavelli is the one ostensibly aimed at in a representative democracy. Private individuals who are raised to dignity by their fellow citizens form, or should form in the estimation of political idealists the governing body, and should have the machinery of government in their hands. This moral lustre is supposed to supply the place of social and class prestige which have been the accompaniments and ornaments of administrative officials in monarchical countries.

Given a small community in which the people are at about the same social and economic level, such a community as was predicated in the formation of the republic and the ideal, barring accidents and limitations, is not far from being practically realized. Keen struggles for political power in a community where the contestants are well known, where their private life as well as their public record are matters of general information would naturally be carried on within certain well defined bounds. In this respect political strife in a small and comparatively poor community would approximate very closely in standard to political strife among the members of a highly favored class like the English governing class of the eighteenth century.

There would be, moreover, a distinct ethical advantage in the case of the republic. Among the members of the superior caste ordinary morals indeed were held secondary to established position and intellectual ability. In the republic the necessity of appeal to the average man who may not so readily detect intellectual superiority but is sensitive to the prevailing ethical code, necessitates a demand for men who are able to go before the mass of ordinary citizens void of offense in the general public estimation. This was unquestionably the case in the early days of the republic. The standard of public morals was fairly high and in the well settled and established communities political life was decorous enough. It is easy of course to point out examples of bribery and corruption, of manipulating votes, and of all the little tricks which are inseparable from contests in which only the

strictest watching can prevent men from taking advantage of one another. But there was no wholesale corruption. Such cheating as there happened to be was small and local and consisted of the petty frauds which members of a community engaged in small business would be likely to practice on one another.

When we arrive at the point, however, where there is a conflict between the law and the economic interests of a rising class a new condition arises. Then ability to break the law becomes a commodity which has a distinct value in the market, and a premium is placed upon the unethical. Thereupon arises the professional politician, in the bad and modern sense.

The trade of professional politician is looked upon with some scorn under any circumstances. Such scorn is, however, traditional and is a survival of the opinion held by a class rich enough to make an avocation of politics and which therefore despised those who demanded pay for political services.

In a social state where poor men are eligible for political position a bare living, at least, must be provided for those who give their time and ability to political life. Politics thereupon, becomes a trade but not necessarily an evil trade. Where, however, the funds provided for the maintenance of politicians are not sufficient to enable them to maintain the appearance of prosperity essential to their social position, the professional, who, after all, must make his career in the life which he has marked out for himself as his chosen vocation, becomes inclined to supplement his income by irregular and dishonest

additions. He thus becomes an object of merchandise and offers his services to those who having specific political work to do are ready to pay for it.

This is already an acknowledged fact that in the United States and all sorts of remedies are proposed. One of the most favored of these is to increase the pay of politicians to the point where they would not be so likely to succumb to temptation at the hands of the wealthy. This is a remedy favored strongly by the fairly prosperous who, judging the pay of professional politicians, in comparison with their own economic standards find it ludicrously inadequate. But the majority of the electorate on the other hand are inclined to think the salary of a professional politician quite comfortable in comparison with their own economic circumstances and would oppose any wholesale increase in the salaries of public officials as extravagance and as tending to the formation of favored class of public servants with incomes and social position much above the average of their constituents. This too was exactly the condition which was sought to be avoided at the institution of the government, and the tradition still prevails to such a degree that it is doubtful whether it can ever be upset.

Moreover, there does not seem to be any reason to suppose that an increase in the economic rewards of officials would tend to greater honesty in their part, as there is no probability that the public service could ever offer salaries at all commensurable with the rewards which the greater capitalists would hold out for the performance of specific political work.

Such work must of necessity, it will be observed, be in contravention of the law. Otherwise it would not be so rewarded, as the ordinary legal business of the greater capitalism would naturally be transacted without the necessity of additional pay, to political representatives.

The solution of the corruption of politics lies in one of two directions, therefore, either the greater capitalism will so completely control affairs that the laws will mirror its economic necessities and the constitutions be so interpreted that those necessities have legal sanction, or the greater capitalism must vanish.

The former of these alternatives would result in the formation of a dominant political caste as in England. The career of politics would cease to become a profession and would be what it formerly was in England, an amusement of the dominant class and we should have a condition of affairs very similar to the eighteenth century in England in which the sons of the dominant class took an active personal interest in politics, held high official portions and controlled the executive, legislative, administrative, and judicial offices. There is no question that under such conditions the more sordid phenomena of politics would tend to disappear, that actual bribery and corruption of politicians would cease and that the ambitions of personal leaders would become the motives of immediate political action.

Some such solution of the present conditions is sought by the "better classes" who openly express their desire that the existing type of politician should be changed and impress upon the

young men of their own class the necessity of taking up politics and removing the political management from the hands of the demagogues. A beginning in that direction has been made in some quarters and the advent of the new type has been hailed with derisive epithets such as "Silk-stockings."

But the limited suffrage was one of the chief reasons for the continued possession of power by the limited aristocratic group above mentioned. Today those who are advocates of selectness in politics eagerly discuss the limitation of the voting power and complain that the suffrage rests upon too broad a basis. In fact, distinct steps have been taken looking to a limitation of the suffrage in various parts of the country. But such a limitation is inconceivable in this or any other modern community. The bourgeoisie has brought the suffrage in its train as a necessary and unavoidable concomitant of its own progress, and the enfranchised voters will march at the funeral of the bourgeoisie. The revival of a privileged aristocratic class in possession of the economic power and at the same time in exclusive control of the political offices is at the present date in the world's history an impossibility and may be left out of our calculations.

The alternative, the elimination of the greater bourgeoisie, can only be accomplished in terms of the triumph of the proletarian, for the proletarian is the only force which can furnish the motive power for the destruction of that latest form of economic tyranny.

Granted the victory of the working class the conditions of present day politics would not be very likely to operate and such matters as the craft of politicians could not very well arise. The matter of good and bad politicians is a present day question, transitory and of no particular interest to the proletarian.

Between good and bad politicians the choice of the proletarian voter is frequently confined to the latter. The so-called good government leagues and political purity leagues are most frequently opposed to the working class, and the latter suffer more conspicuously at their hands than at the hands of the bad politicians. This arises from the fact that those organizations are generally controlled by the middle classes and small bourgeois who find their immediate economic interests in antagonism to the interests of organized labor. They resent the demands of organized labor, in fact, they cannot afford to accede to them and maintain their position in face of the economic pressure to which they are subjected in their competition with the greater capitalism. Hence it comes about that, generally speaking, the condition of labor is worse in those regions where the small bourgeoisie is in power. The most sweeping municipal ordinance against trade union activities was passed in Los Angeles, a town notoriously under the domination of the small bourgeoisie. In the same State, California, which is admittedly an advanced community from the labor standpoint, armed scabs were allowed freely to walk about in Oakland, a town under the influence of the small bourgeois. Many other such instances could be given.

Generally speaking, there is an antipathy between the good politicians and the laboring class, arising from a more or less conscious understanding on the part of the workers of their economic interests. So an open appeal to ethics in political matters is generally rebuffed by the labor vote, to the disgust of the respectable, who regard the attitude of the worker in this matter as evidence of his irredeemable obtuseness on moral questions.

The question of good government continually arises at election times but can be dismissed easily for it does not concern the working class. The shame of city governments and the corruption prevailing in the legislatures are the concern of the bourgeois alone; they do not reflect upon the proletariat, and the latter suffers nothing from their persistence, neither does he gain anything by their removal under the present conditions of society.

The only salvation of the worker lies in his independent political attitude, that determined isolation from capitalist politics which is the result of his economic isolation, and his invincible antagonism to all that the present system implies.

His political actions are neither ethical nor unethical; they depend upon no bourgeois conceptions as to what constitutes good or bad politics. They are aimed frankly at the acquisition of power and derive their propulsion from the immediate economic needs of the proletariat as displayed in its industrial movements.

MAKING A POLITICAL PARTY

The reflex of industrial action in politics is so automatic that it needs no deliberately con-

structed political party for its manifestation. Indeed where such a party is made with the intention of giving representation to an economic interest it fails of its purpose.

The reason of this failure lies in the fact that such a party is constructed by those who are dominated by theoretical views upon the abstract questions involved in the matters at issue. In so far as those views coincide with the material necessities of a sufficiently large number of people to constitute a distinct economic class they will receive recognition at the hands of one or another of the recognized political factions; always provided that the satisfaction of the demands implied in the economic movement does not transcend the limits of political action necessary for the maintenance of the existing economic regime.

There are many instances of parties having been brought unnecessarily into the field only to be absorbed later by one or other of the recognized political parties. Such parties have served rather as an advertisement of the actual demand for certain economic changes, but as soon as that demand has become sufficiently loud, politicians anxious for office have yielded more or less acquiescence and the party which began with a flourish of trumpets has disappeared with an almost astonishing celerity.

If the demand exists politicians will not fail to meet it, in fact not to do so is essential folly in politics. Such political demands as can be conceded are conceded by the ordinary politicians who depend upon the Supreme Court and a written constitution to drive back any of the

black sheep measures which may have strayed from the fold of respectability.

The economic necessities of the farming class and a portion of the small bourgeoisie which mirrored themselves in the Populist movement persisted. They apparently failed of political recognition, because the Democratic Party undertook to represent them and the smaller People's Party became merged in the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party failed to achieve victory in that the party of the greater capitalism, the Republican, reflected a more powerful economic force and the party of the small bourgeoisie succumbed to superior strength.

Did then the political demands of the small bourgeoisie and the farmers not receive recognition? They did. A number of the political changes which they required have been carried out and are now being carried out by the reform wing of the Republican Party. It would be hard to find a better example of the automatic political registering of the demands of an economic class. Initiative, referendum, recall, direct primaries, and a number of political changes which in the estimation of that class were essential to the political well being of its members have all been conceded, and when the Democratic Party failed the Republican Party itself produced the exponents and the champions of the smaller bourgeois demands. To a certain extent even their economic demands apart from mere changes in the machinery of government have received recognition and the various recent attacks upon the transportation companies, for example, all bear witness to the political expression of the economic necessities of the small bourgeoisie.

The Socialist Party came into being ostensibly as a proletarian party, but in reality representing but one portion of the working class, the skilled labor element, which as we have seen verges on the edge of the small bourgeoisie. The Socialist Labor Party, its predecessor, had detected the now much more evident truth, that the organized American working class as it appears in the distinctive organization, the American Federation of Labor, is not in reality that portion of the American proletariat which can be relied upon for revolutionary proletarian action.

The Socialist Labor Party thereupon endeavored to bring into existence a revolutionary unionism which might function as an economic organization and whose political exponent the Socialist Labor Party might be. This was all perfectly correct from a theoretical standpoint, but it had the essential weakness of being a creation by fiat. Lassalle says that no one makes revolutions; neither, in fact, does any one make industrial movements or political parties. They grow, and they grow not according to schedule. At any rate it is sufficient to say at present that the Socialist Labor Party took a position which development and the process of political change have shown to have been theoretically correct.

The Socialist Party was formed of those members of the Socialist Labor Party and others who had progressed no further in their intellectual sociological grasp than the point of view of the economic interests of the organized skilled laborer. Out of this element in addition to the thoroughly whipped and correspondingly discontented small bourgeoisie the Socialist Party was

formed. The demand for its existence has been evidenced by its growth, it has become more and more the exponent of the economic concepts of the skilled artisan, the small storekeeper, the unsuccessful professional man, and all that heterogeneous mass of discontented and dissatisfied which finds no other political expression.

The platform of the Socialist Party therefore represents the hodge-podge demands of the discontented. As a Socialist Party and claiming to represent the proletariat as a whole it attracts to its ranks those who find in a clear proletarian platform the only solution of the problems inherent in the present economic system. As the representative of the smaller bourgeoisie and the skilled organized labor of the American Federation of Labor the Socialist Party must more and more endeavor to realize actual political power in terms of the economic interests which brought it into being and which sustain it. Between these elements there is of necessity conflict and the gulf is unbridgable.

The exponent of the proletarian doctrine becomes the advocate of the industrial form of organization and would confine the platform of the party to a revolutionary statement, leaving the rest free for the development of conditions and the handling of proletarian interests in accordance with the progress of the economic fight.

The official wing, however, of the Socialist Party as the representative of a non-revolutionary body, *i. e.*, the skilled artisan element and the small bourgeoisie, feels that it must produce actual political results, must win elections, must

gain administrative control, and in fact must operate, as these officials declare, as a live and efficient political expression. In this respect, however, the Socialist Party suffers a serious handicap. In so far as its aims are not revolutionary its program can be more or less readily adopted by one or other of the ordinary political parties which can take over the demands of organized labor and the smaller bourgeoisie as the demands of the Populists have been shown to have been taken over. A larger party can do this the more readily as it can give more plausible promises of accomplishment. That such a party actually carries out some of its promises has been shown in the last legislature of California where the reform Republican wing, without having received conspicuous trade union support at the preceding election, nevertheless actually accomplished and endeavored to accomplish more legislation on behalf of the trade unions than the Socialist Party in its State platform was able to promise them. Under such conditions it will be seen that the Socialist Party will find it no easy matter to compete with the older parties in the effort to secure the organized labor vote as long as the demands of organized labor are kept within the frontiers of the admittedly respectable.

Were the continued existence of the Socialist Party dependent upon its present attitude towards the pure and simple labor unions and the small bourgeoisie its term of life would be brief for the reasons above stated. How brief, a recent incident in California politics will show. The Socialist Party candidate for mayor won the election at Berkeley, a town of some forty

thousand inhabitants and the seat of the State University upon a platform of public ownership of public utilities. Immediately afterwards the official Republican wing at Oakland, a considerable town in close proximity to Berkeley and with a much larger population than Berkeley, proclaimed that their candidate for mayor stood upon a platform practically identical with that of the Socialist candidate for Berkeley. Directly the Socialist Party puts up a popular platform, that is, a platform which will receive the approval of the small bourgeoisie, the politicians counter upon it with the explanation that they are Socialists too and will do all that the Socialists promise. This makes it hard for the Socialist Party and it would speedily go the way of all minor propaganda parties like the People's Party were it not for the following reason:

The Socialist Party by its claim to be a proletarian party and its outward acceptance of the Socialist doctrines of the class struggle in addition to its role as apostle of the craft union and the small bourgeoisie, becomes the natural refuge of the proletarian and the industrial unionist.

This accommodation of two diverse elements, while producing unrest and dissension in the party is in reality its salvation. The elimination of the proletarian element would leave the party rudderless, and at the mercy of those leaders whom inclination or personal ambition inclines to the opportunistic role. The presence of this proletarian element which is always active, vigorous and influential, in proportion as the economic conditions of the locality allow it to be so, makes the impassable gulf between the Socialist Party and the ordinary politician. The oppor-

tunist sees this and frequently endeavors to make the Socialist Party correspond in form more closely to the ordinary political parties, but the revolutionary proletarian always objects to any loosening and in this way the Socialist Party manages to maintain its existence and actually to develop an increasing independence in spite of the fact that the majority of people would undoubtedly support most of its immediate proposals and in fact do so when they are made by a recognized party other than the Socialist.

As the industrial movement grows and the contest with the employing class develops on the new plane the political reflex of that industrial action finds itself in the Socialist Party. No matter that the Socialist Party has a reform platform at the present time, no matter if it flirts with the small bourgeoisie and is inclined to the craft unionism. Directly the conflict comes at the point of contact in the shop the Socialist Party is bound to take the proletarian side in that conflict and to challenge the legal basis of the existing system, to become in fact as in name a revolutionary political movement. This cannot be avoided. It has been shown repeatedly in European politics and it will of necessity occur here. Without industrial action the Socialist Party would be but a somewhat uninteresting symptom of trade union and petit-bourgeois discontent. With industrial action it of necessity becomes transformed into a fighting and revolutionary political organization.

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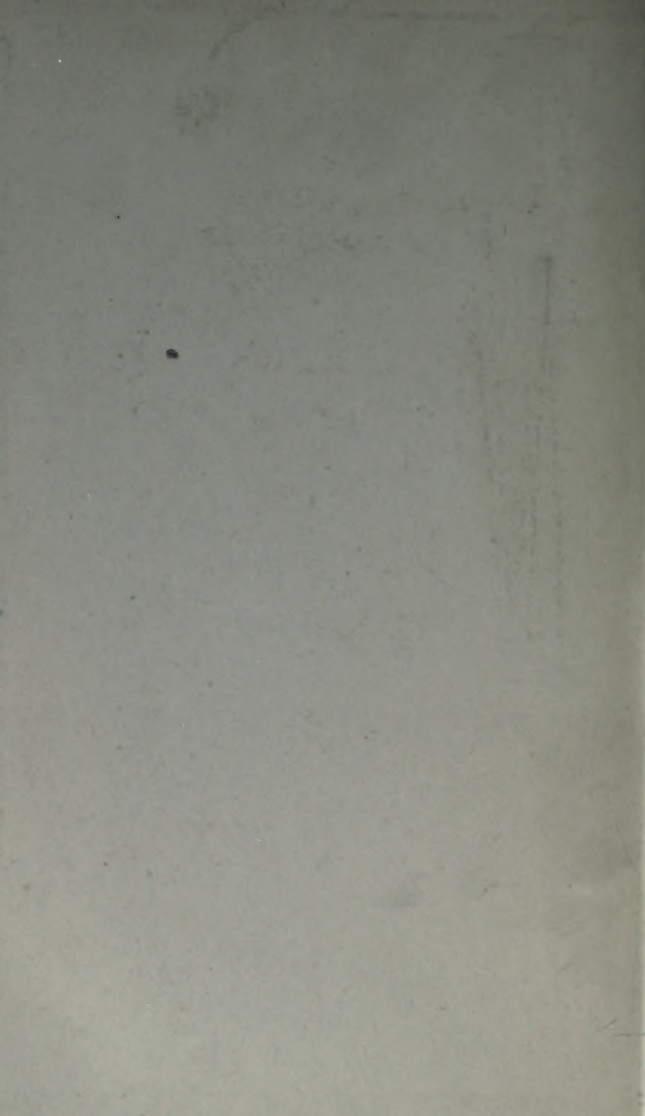
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